

## HELMAND REHEARSAL

**BATTLE TESTS  
FOR MARINES  
AND MEDICS**

Climbing thousands of feet above eastern England, Cdr Dave Lindsay's Harrier leaves vapour trails streaking across the sky. The Commanding Officer of 800 Naval Air Squadron was one of 16 Naval and RAF aviators who climbed into cockpits for the jump jet's final flight after more than 40 years' service. See the centre pages for more stunning images.

Picture: Jamie Hunter

# FINAL FLIGHT





# Fleet Focus

DIFFERENT year, same story.

In the Gulf. In Afghanistan. In the Indian Ocean. In the UK. 2011 opened with the men and women of the Royal Navy heavily committed in all these waters.

And it also opened with the aftershocks of October's defence review still rippling through the entire Senior Service.

The Harriers of **800 NAS** have flown for the last time (see the centre pages); **HMS Illustrious** will be decommissioned one year earlier than planned and **HMS Albion** mothballed (see right) – but not before the latter leads a task force to the Med and Middle East (see opposite).

The Sword of Damocles hangs over Type 22s **HMS Cumberland** and **Cornwall**, which will pay off once their current deployments end (as we write, their sisters **Chatham** and **Campbeltown** are paying farewell visits to affiliates in home waters before bowing out).

In Cornwall's case, her final tour of duty is chasing pirates (see page 19), while Cumberland is on Operation Telic duties (see pages 4-5).

The Fighting Sausage was one of around a dozen RN ships east of Suez at the turn of the year. Six of those vessels – Cumberland plus minehunters **Grimsby**, **Middleton**, **Chiddingfold** and **Pembroke**, and tanker **RFA Bayleaf** – spent the New Year in Dubai.

Homeward bound from the Gulf was **RFA Cardigan Bay**, whose mission training the Iraqi Navy has come to an end – as evidenced by the arrival of new fast patrol boats in Umm Qasr, home of the RN-led I-TAM(N) – **Iraq Training and Advisory Mission (Navy)** (see page 6).

**HMS Ambush**, the second of the seven-strong Astute-class submarines, has taken to the water after a formal naming ceremony in the cavernous dock hall in Barrow (see page 8).

As for the existing fleet of boats, **HMS Triumph** has been on Perisher duties in Scotland while her sister **Turbulent** received a glowing testimonial from those hard-to-please folk at FOST (see page 8).

In the world of the Type 45 destroyers, **HMS Dragon** has completed her sea trials while her older sister **Dauntless** is engaged on cold weather trials in Norway (see opposite).

Three ships are already bound for east of Suez – **HMS Iron Duke** heading to the Gulf for the first time (see page 7); **HMS Echo** to carry out survey work; and **HMS Richmond** to tackle pirates before making for the Far East (see page 6).

Pirate duties are finished for **HMS Montrose** (right), while MCM Crew 7's stint on **HMS Middleton** has come to an end; Crew 2 have taken charge of the minehunter in Bahrain, while Crew 7 are settling in on **HMS Ledbury** in Portsmouth (see page 6).

From the spring **3 Commando Brigade** will be the lead British formation on the ground in Afghanistan.

The brigade has been preparing methodically for the deployment: **45 Cdo** headed to a mock Afghan village in Norfolk (see pages 16-17); **naval medics** decamped to Chivenor for some (mock) bloody training (see page 15).

Already in theatre are **847 NAS** who've flown out with new Lynx to support their Commando Helicopter Force Sea King comrades (see opposite).

Sailors in the Falklands replaced the White Ensign on the wreck of **HMS Antelope**, sunk in the 1982 conflict (see page 10). Today's Naval guardian of the islands, **HMS Clyde**, took part in festive period events, including the Stanley raft race where, for once, they didn't win the wooden spoon (see page 42).

And finally, Britain's busiest Search and Rescue unit – **HMS Gannet** – began 2011 as it ended 2010... busy (see page 9).

Plus ça change...

## Montrose's tangible impact on piracy

A HUG for HMS Montrose's ET(ME) Tom Hillman from family – a moment of warmth on an otherwise bitter winter's day in Devonport.

Montrose was the last ship to return from deployment – chasing pirates off Somalia – in 2010.

Temperatures were more Brrrr than Arrghh in Montrose's native base, Devonport, but that did not stop a sizeable crowd of friends and family waiting in the cold to welcome the frigate home after five months east of Suez.

Since departing the West Country last summer, the frigate has been attached to a NATO task force executing Operation Shield, safeguarding merchantmen and putting Somali pirates under the knout.

There was quite a lot of the latter with 'Pirate Action Groups' – whalers and small skiffs packed with fuel and weapons – blown up and the freeing of the crew of the freighter MV Beluga Fortune in the wake of an abortive assault by the Somali brigands.

The ship's 815 Naval Air Squadron Lynx conducted scores of hours of surveillance flights along the coast of Somalia, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions of the known pirate camps to gather details for the coalition on the movements of the freebooters and their craft.

As well as policing the Horn of Africa and environs, Montrose also visited the Seychelles

and Tanzania to provide engineering support and training in board-and-search techniques so these nations' defence forces can take a greater role in anti-piracy operations.

"I am very proud of my ship's company for what they have achieved with tangible results after deterring pirate activity by our presence and by our actions," said the frigate's CO Cdr Jonathan Lett.

His marine engineer officer Lt Cdr Duncan Humphrey added: "This was one of the most successful and enjoyable deployments I have been on in the Navy. Not only did we see and were able to measure the successful results of our counter-piracy action, but also visited some interesting countries when we had the chance of a break."

Robert Smith stepped off the gangway to be hugged by his partner Natalie, their baby son Kai and mother-in-law Jenny Williams who braved the snowy weather in Hull to make the 350-mile journey to Devonport.

"Robert has been longing to cuddle Kai who was only two weeks old when he sailed," said Natalie. "I have been sending him so many photos by email to keep him up to date with how Kai has changed."

Now the ship's company are back from leave there's some maintenance to carry out on the frigate, followed by a trip to Scotland to take part in the next Joint Warrior war game, then Operational Sea Training off Plymouth which will determine that Montrose is ready to deploy once again.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Hooper, FRPU West



## Cuts details thrashed out

HMS Illustrious will be axed one year early and amphibious flagship HMS Albion will be mothballed in the autumn after details of the Strategic Defence and Security Review were thrashed out.

No Type 22 frigate will fly the White Ensign beyond April and three RFA support vessels are also being paid off that same month, Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox has told MPs.

His announcement follows October's review which warned that apart from HMS Ark Royal being decommissioned early, the axe would fall on all Type 22 frigates, one of two remaining carriers – either Illustrious or Ocean – and either Albion or Bulwark would be put into extended readiness.

The review also stated that one Bay class landing ship and other RFA vessels would leave service; a smaller Fleet meant fewer support ships would be required.

After two months' work, the fine details of the cuts have been worked out, Dr Fox said:

■ **HMS Illustrious**, currently in refit in Scotland, will run until 2014 when she will be decommissioned as HMS Ocean emerges from refit; the Mighty O will serve as the nation's on-call carrier until HMS Queen Elizabeth enters service in the middle of the decade.

■ **HMS Chatham**, Campbeltown and Cumberland (currently deployed in the Gulf) will all be out of service by April 1; Cornwall will pay off when she returns from her anti-piracy patrol in late April.

■ **HMS Albion** will enter extended readiness in the autumn when her sister Bulwark is declared fully operational after her refit; the two ships will trade places in 2016 when Bulwark enters refit again.

■ **RFA Largs Bay** will be withdrawn from service in April after just four and a half years' service.

■ **Veteran tanker RFA Bayleaf** and one-stop support ship RFA Fort George will also be paid off in April.





## 847 ready to make their Mark (9)

THE Jungly Lynx force are back in Afghanistan – this time with a new aircraft.

Since 847 Naval Air Squadron last deployed to Helmand in the winter of 2008-09, it has swapped the Lynx Mk7 for the Mk9 – better suited to the challenging Helmand environment.

It's got souped-up engines which can cope with 'hot and high' – allowing the Lynx force to fly throughout the Afghan summer.

In addition, the new Lynx has been equipped with a larger and more powerful 0.50 calibre machine gun for the door gunner.

As for the mission facing the 50 or so personnel deploying from RNAS Yeovilton, well that's pretty much as it was during the previous tour of duty in Helmand.

The main task is to ride shotgun for other Allied helicopters in theatre as they re-supply Forward Operating Bases.

The 847 aircrew are also likely to be called upon to conduct reconnaissance, convoy escort, airborne command and control, and fire support with artillery and fast jets.

All of which, of course, requires round-the-clock attention from engineers, technicians and support staff.

The squadron has undergone six months of training with the new Lynx to prepare them for this latest tour of duty, learning how to operate and maintain the Mk9.

Maj Dave Sutton RM of 847 B Flight said that although some of the personnel deploying were Afghan novices, others had "vast experience of operational deployments" and some had spent time on the ground in Afghanistan serving with Commando units.

"We have trained extremely hard for all eventualities and we are confident that we will provide both Coalition and Afghan allies with all that is required of us," he added.

Already in theatre are substantial elements of the rest of the front-line Commando Helicopter Force, the Jungly Sea Kings of 845 and 846 NAS, also based at Yeovilton.

## Last chance for freedom

THE men and women of HMS Ark Royal will enjoy freedom for the final time on February 12.

The ship's company of the Navy's former flagship head to Leeds for a farewell visit to the city which has supported three generations of Ark Royals, going back to World War 2.

The latest bearer of the Ark Royal name has already made her final entry to Portsmouth. Her sailors have paraded through the heart of that city as part of the Mighty Ark's lengthy winding-down following October's shock decision to axe the famous carrier under the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

A 160-strong contingent is heading up the M1 for a series of farewell events over the weekend of February 11-13.

The sailors will meet numerous affiliates during their time in Leeds, including civic and business leaders, the Royal Armouries, local Sea Cadets and Leeds-based members of the Royal Naval Reserves.

The highlight of the weekend will be a 'goodbye parade' through Leeds city centre at 11am on the 12th when the Ark crew exercise their Freedom of the City.

The Band of HM Royal Marines Scotland will lead the parade, including an armed guard, Naval Colours and the ship's freedom scroll, from Leeds City Museum through the centre to the town hall, where the lord mayor will take the salute.

# Roar of the Dragon



## REMEMBER, remember the fifth of November.

Not for any of that Guy Fawkes malarkey, but for the day when HMS Dragon first put to sea.

After one month's trials off Western Scotland, allowing Dragon to clear her throat (literally in the case of her main gun), the ship has resumed fitting out and tests on the Clyde at Scotstoun with the engineers and ship's company more than pleased with her performance.

Indeed, the ship surpassed the 29kts top speed expected of her when the class was ordered a decade ago.

She 'throttled up' to reach 32 knots (37 mph) – although it doesn't make Dragon the fastest destroyer as veteran HMS York can manage nearly 35kts.

After reaching full whack, the Type 45 then applied the 'handbrake' and came to a stop in a little over 800 yards – less than half a mile.

After that it was time for the 45's party piece, heeling over 12° to carve a figure of eight in the relatively sheltered waters of the Firth of Clyde.

Thanks to the trail blazed by her three older sisters, Dragon put to sea with far fewer technical issues, improved software, tweaked machinery – and with her mixed RN/BAE ship's company aware of what the 45s can and cannot do.

The first fortnight at sea was used to test the basics – engines, rudder, comms, 'hotel services' (galley, fresh water production, sewage treatment) – before moving away from the relatively sheltered waters off Arran and Kintyre to flash up her weapons systems.

For that she had to make for the ranges off Benbecula in the Outer Hebrides, never the warmest place in the British Isles, and positively (or should that be negatively...) Siberian when Dragon arrived.

Time to warm things up with

some fire – the main 4.5in gun (pictured above, if you were wondering...) followed by the 30mm cannons and finally the machine-guns.

Dragon's Sampson radar was also flashed up off the Benbecula range; it was here that Dauntless fired the Sea Viper missile for the first time a couple of months earlier – and the ops room team found themselves tracking aircraft at ranges in excess of 200 miles, namely planes approaching Aberdeen, Glasgow and Belfast airports.

And the electro-optic sights and laser range finders were tested to assess Dragon's ability to engage targets at close range.

"I've been associated with the development of various parts of the Type 45's combat system for the past 15 years – it's very rewarding to see it coming to life onboard Dragon before my eyes," said Cdr Peter Frankham, the ship's weapon engineer officer.

There was also time to begin engendering Dragon's soul with some sport – volleyball, table tennis (!), bucket ball (basketball with a bucket, not a basket) and non-stop cricket in the 'Millennium Stadium' (aka hangar) – regular circuit training and a one-kilometre sponsored row.

The latter was the healthy side of fundraising for the Erskine House charity which provides care for veterans; the less healthy side came courtesy of sales from Drago's Snacks, the destroyer's tuck shop.

And evidently quite a lot of chocolate was munched because in all £1,800 was raised for the charity during Dragon's four-week stint at sea.

The adverse winter weather (you might have seen a bit about it in the media...) put the kibosh on a day at sea for VIPs, but



it didn't stop Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox joining Dragon to witness progress with the Type 45 programme, cross-decking from ballistic missile submarine HMS Vanguard as the latter returned from a deterrent patrol.

And that's just about it for now, although it won't be long (April) before D35 is back at sea. Between now and then

there's a lot of work to be carried out on her combat systems.

If the second spell of sea trials and final work on the ship go according to plan, Dragon will be handed over to the RN in September, by which time the fifth ship in the programme, Defender, should be ready for trials.

The sixth and final Type 45, HMS Duncan, is in the early stages of fitting out following her launch in October. She's not due to put to sea until 2012.

## To coldly go where no 45 has been

WHILE HMS Dragon has been throwing herself around in the waters of western Scotland her older sister Dauntless headed even further north.

The second Type 45 destroyer is in Norwegian waters, first Bergen, then Tromsø (200 miles inside the Arctic Circle) to conduct cold weather trials (the lucky so-and-sos in HMS Daring got the plum job of warm weather trials...).

As well as testing the destroyer's ability to cope with the cold (according to the Type 45's specs the air conditioning should sustain temperatures at a very pleasant 25°C) the exercises around Norway should serve as a warm up (sorry) for Operational Sea Training...

...which should be kicking in off Plymouth in a matter of days.

Lessons learned during Daring's OST experience last spring have been passed on both to D33 and the FOSTies putting Dauntless through her paces.

Once through OST the destroyer's thrown straight into a Joint Warrior exercise (the twice-yearly international war games run from Faslane) – the first 45 to take part.

Thereafter there's a visit to Newcastle, Dauntless' affiliated city and, post Easter leave, the ship will work up with a US carrier battlegroup (like Daring before her) for what the RN calls 'Tier 2' training – basically 'super OST', testing a ship's ability to fight as part of a task group.

The ship's lined up to visit the DSEi defence exhibition in London's Docklands in September, a spot more training and a bit of maintenance, then a first deployment in early 2012.

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## Flagship shipshape

BRITAIN'S flagship, HMS Albion, is in the throes of some top-up training to prepare her for the key deployment of 2011.

The assault ship is lined up to lead the Cougar task group – an amphibious task force which will exercise in the Mediterranean and east of Suez with Allied nations.

Albion's fairly-well worked-up already, having taken part in the Auriga deployment to the USA last year, which culminated in major amphibious landings along the Eastern Seaboard.

Amphibious skills can quickly fade, however, so there's a month-long Directed Continuous Training – basically a mini-OST organised by the Flag Officer Sea Training.

The FOSTies will test not only the ability of the sailors and Royal Marines of 6 Assault Squadron, Albion's permanent commando unit, to land and recover troops, but also deal with fire, flood, disaster relief and any other trials and tribulations the FOST staff can dream up.

And while all this is going on, the flagship is hosting 40 officer cadets from Dartmouth who are enjoying their first sustained period at sea aboard a British warship.

They're joining Albion for ten weeks to work alongside the ship's company before returning to BRNC to complete their officer training.



# GLOBAL REACH

● A pair of US Coast Guard vessels pass in front of the Al Basrah terminal watched by HMS Cumberland and the USS O'Kane



● A member of Cumberland's ship's company on watch as the Type 22 enters Bahrain

● A dhow entering Doha harbour – as seen from HMS Chiddingfold



pictures: la(phot) jay allen, frpu east



● Two's company... HMS Cumberland exercising with Saudi Arabian frigate HMS Al Riyadh and (above) escorting FS Charles de Gaulle through the Strait of Hormuz on Boxing Day

# Christ

THE silhouette is unmistakable.

Yes, that's right, it's a Sandown-class minehunter. Her Majesty's Ship **Pembroke** to be precise.

The backdrop is quite eye-catching too: the impressive waterfront skyline of Dubai, dominated by the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building (2,717ft or 828 metres if you prefer metric).

Bahrain-based Pembroke was one of half a dozen Royal Navy vessels to New Year (*made-up verb – Ed*) in the Middle East's most popular holiday destination.

It's popular not least because it's toasty.

As Blighty was shivering in the coldest December in a century, Pembroke arrived in the UAE with temperatures touching 25°C (77°F).

She was joined in the Middle East metropolis by her sister **Grimsby**, plus Hunts **Chiddingfold** and **Middleton** which complete the quartet of RN mine warfare forces based in Bahrain. Just for good measures, **HMS Cumberland** and **RFA Bayleaf** also spent the turn of the year at Port Rashid, Dubai.

And what a way to see in 2011.

The Burj Khalifa served as the backdrop for one of the most stunning (and probably highest) fireworks displays which rang in the New Year around the globe.

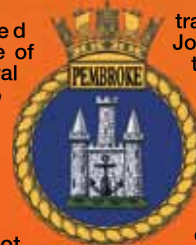
After that late night (and perhaps the

odd tipple), many of the sailors hit the beaches of Jumeirah – one of Dubai's most exclusive districts.

But after a busy 2010 we think it's only fair that the sailors were allowed three days' to let their (short) hair down.

In Pembroke's case, until just a few weeks ago, her crew were 'enjoying' the cooler climes of north-west Scotland aboard HMS Walney.

They carried out extensive training and took part in Joint Warrior war games, then decommissioned Walney, sailing her into Portsmouth for disposal, before a handful of days off and flying out to Bahrain to take charge of Pembroke as part of the latest rotation of crews.



FOR the Cheery Chid Dubai was the second visit to one of the Gulf's great cities in a fortnight.

Ten days before Christmas the minehunter paid a three-day 'working visit' to Doha, the Qatari capital still enjoying the international spotlight after being awarded the 2022 World Cup.

Within an hour of the lines and gangway going across, a class of 25 schoolchildren were filing aboard the Hunt-class warship.

The 13 and 14-year-olds from Park House English School were given a thorough tour of the ship, watching fire-fighting drills on the sweep deck with PO Miles and learning about the diving equipment with LD Binns.

Meanwhile in the wardroom... conversation revolved around Exercise Predatory Falcon, a major exercise with the Qatari Navy which in 2010 saw the RN commit the largest number of vessels. Half a dozen senior





# Christmas presence

Qatari officers discussed the war games with the Chid team before receiving a tour of the ship.

Although this was a working visit, there was time for the ship's company to explore Doha and everything it has to offer. The Museum of Islamic Arts and souq market proved popular destinations for the Chids, who also witnessed Qatari National Day celebrations on

December 18; the latter reached a stunning finale with a spectacular lighting and fountain display in Doha Bay.

A carefully-selected team of sailors trotted out on the turf of Doha Rugby Football Club for a clash with an expat side.

The experience of Chid's players varied from old hands to rugby virgins – so the 12-12 final result (including a 'man of the match' gong for AB(D) 'Dolly' Parton) was particularly satisfying, not least as the previous RN visitors to Doha had been trounced by the locals...

Back in Bahrain Chiddingfold and Grimsby played host to a succession of VIPs from senior US officers to representatives from Canada's upper house, the Senate, led by its Speaker, Noel Kinsella. The latter group was keen to learn about the international naval effort east of Suez – and about the RN's minehunting capability and its Seafox robot submersibles in particular.

The 100 (ish) sailors aboard Chiddingfold and Grimsby comprised 1/13th of Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel on duty east of Suez (we're discounting Afghanistan here...) as 2010 came to an end – in excess of 1,300 men and women in all.

ONE quarter of them could be found aboard the good ship Cumberland, which was accompanying France's flagship Charles de Gaulle while most of us were still sleeping off Christmas excesses.

Cumberland was at sea on December 25, but it didn't stop traditional festive fare on board.

Santa (who bore an uncanny resemblance to Executive Warrant Officer WO1 Johnny Lambert) still clambered down the funnel in company with his assistants (again *Doppelgängers*, this time for CPO(SC) Ali James and LPT Johnny Logan) and officers served ratings when it came to turkey, spuds, sprouts (the devil's vegetable) and all the trimmings.

All of which was but a distant memory by the morning of Boxing Day as the Type 22 frigate shepherded the 40,000-tonne carrier (or should that be *porte-avions*) through the Strait of Hormuz, the choke point at the entrance to/exit of the Gulf.

Over Christmas the de Gaulle was conducting air operations over Afghanistan from the Indian Ocean – as good an example of the potential of carrier strike as you'll find these days – with the Mighty Sausage (or is it the Fighting Sausage – we're never quite sure) as her chaperone.

We last caught up with Cumberland in the emirate of Ras al Khaimah – about 50 miles along the coast from Dubai – hosting guest of honour Sheikh Saud bin Saqr al Qasimi.

What we didn't tell you was that it was one of the first official functions for the sheikh, whose country had just emerged from official mourning following the

death of his father – at 92 the oldest and longest-serving monarch in the world.

And talking of long-serving monarchs... 130 miles to the south lies Abu Dhabi, where the Fighting Sausage could also be found in support of royal events.

Her sailors were on hand at various events involving the state visit of the Queen, Duke of Edinburgh and Duke of York.

Cumberland's appearance in Abu Dhabi wasn't purely cosmetic, however; she took part in Air Khandjar – an air-sea exercise with the RAF and the Emirati Air Force.

This is F85's final tour of duty in a career stretching back to the end of the 1980s.

Like her three sisters, she's a victim of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (ironically the ship's company learned Cumberland's fate the day the frigate entered the operational theatre).

"While it is a great sadness for the Navy to lose Cumberland, we've been determined to make her last deployment a fitting end to the ship's distinguished history," said Capt Steve Dainton, the 22's final Commanding Officer.

"She deserves a proud place in the history of the Navy.

"The events with which we will mark her passing when we get back to UK will be poignant, but also a celebration of a truly great ship."

Come the end of April there will no longer be any 22s on active service with Her Majesty's Navy, closing a 30-year chapter of RN history.

But it's not quite time to finish the chapter yet.

CUMBERLAND'S six-month tour

of duty is showing just how much the Gulf mission has evolved in the past few years.

No longer is it week upon week stooging around Iraq's two oil platforms.

Indeed, these days Iraq's sailors and marines carry out four-fifths of the protection mission for the Khawr al Amaya and Al Basrah terminals...

...and even a basic understanding of percentages tells you that there's still a job for Allied naval forces to carry out.

Hence the rather impressive shot of two US Coast Guard vessels preparing to pass in front of ABOT – as anyone who's served out here calls the Al Basrah platform – watched by HMS Cumberland and the American Arleigh Burke destroyer USS O'Kane.

The little photo opportunity for the forces of the RN-led Combined Task Force Iraqi Maritime was staged as Britain's second-most senior admiral visited

the Gulf to thank sailors and marines for their continued service over the festive period.

The Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary currently have a dozen warships, survey vessels and auxiliaries deployed in the region, plus personnel at Umm Qasr, Bahrain and on the Iraqi oil platforms.

Admiral Sir Trevor Soar, Commander-in-Chief Fleet, paid his second visit of the year to the region, beginning his whistle-stop tour in Umm Qasr, home of the Iraqi Navy – and the joint UK/US team training its personnel.

The admiral toured the base and stepped aboard one of Iraq's new Swift-class patrol craft, the first of several boats which will eventually take full responsibility for protecting Iraqi

territorial waters.

Then it was on to the USS O'Kane off the Al Basrah platform to see the work done to safeguard this linchpin in Iraq's economy.

ABOT is the newer of two terminals off the Al Faw peninsula which disgorges upwards of three million barrels of oil a day into waiting tankers.

"The Iraqi Navy is making great progress and now has responsibility for some 80 per cent of all Iraqi territorial waters. I am delighted that Admiral Soar was able to see for himself the substantial contribution that personnel from the Royal Navy are making toward this achievement," said Cdre

Tony Radakin, commander of **Combined Task Force Iraqi Maritime**.

Next stop for the admiral was Cumberland and a chance to chat with each of the ship's departments, plus the T22's Royal Marines boarding team.

Cumberland's mission is directed from Bahrain, the hub of Allied naval efforts in the region. It's home to the US Fifth Fleet headquarters and, in its grounds, the **UK Maritime Component Command**.

It's from here that RN and RM personnel choreograph the movements of vessels across 2½ million square miles of water east of Suez.

In addition, Admiral Soar also had time with a handful of Royal Navy personnel who occupy positions in the staff of Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Forces, a 25-nation naval partnership committed to maritime security in the Middle East through anti-piracy and counter-terrorism operations.

A few minutes' drive from the

UKMCC centre is Mina Salman, home to the four aforementioned minehunters, a team of engineers from the Fleet Support Unit, and **RFA Lyme Bay** which acts as the afloat headquarters for the Commander UK Mine Countermeasures Forces.

The final leg of C-in-C Fleet's visit was in the United Arab Emirates, where he visited survey ship **HMS Enterprise**, tanker **RFA Bayleaf**, which provides fuel to Allied warships in the region, **RFA Fort Victoria**, in port after a sustained – and successful – period hunting pirates in the Somali Basin.

"As people in Britain were enjoying their Christmas meal, I hope they spared a thought for the sailors, Royal Marines and support staff in the Gulf who were working for their interests over the festive period – as they do 365 days a year – in support of maritime security and freedom of the seas," said Admiral Soar.

"The Arabian Gulf contains some of the world's most important shipping lanes and energy related infrastructure. Stability and security in this region is directly connected to the UK's own wellbeing, as well as that of the international community."

Cdre Tim Fraser, UK Maritime Component Commander added:

"Alongside the nuclear deterrent and our efforts in Afghanistan, the Middle East maritime domain is surely one of our most important defence priorities.

"This is the second occasion in six months that Admiral Soar has visited us. I know the continuing attention and priority which he attaches to our work is greatly appreciated by the Royal Navy ships and personnel in this region."

■ **Cardigan Bay brings the curtain down on Gulf training mission, page 6**





## 7 (months) up for Middleton

ARRIVING in the UK just about now are the 40-plus men and women of HMS Middleton.

But if you're expecting to catch sight of M34 gliding past Round Tower, you've got a long wait – the ship herself is staying put in the Gulf.

In the latest turnaround of minehunter crews in the Gulf, Crew 7's time is up aboard the Hunt-class warship, Crew 2's stint is just beginning.

Crew 7 have been in charge of Middleton since last May – 216 days in all.

In that time the ship's mine clearance divers have carried out 102 exercises and spent more than 25 hours under water.

Their shipmates launched Seafox, the robot submarine which neutralises mines and explosive devices, more than 150 times as Middleton added 5,220 nautical miles (6,000 statute miles) to her odometer.

And all this in the ever-challenging weather conditions of the Gulf; in high summer, temperatures topped 55°C with 99 per cent humidity and 36°C sea water temperature... which is not a lot of fun to work in.

But work the Middletons did. The ship took part in a succession of exercises during the summer and autumn with local and international navies, often in company with the RN's other assets in the region – HMS Grimsby, Pembroke and Chiddingfold and mine warfare mother ship RFA Lyme Bay.

That force has ranged up and down the Gulf; in Middleton's case, she spent sufficient time operating off Iraq for her crew to earn the Operation Telic medal (which will be presented when they're back in the UK).

By November, three months of constant exercising in the harsh environment had taken its toll – the searing heat, sand and salt had all left their mark on the 26-year-old warship.

That prompted a five-week maintenance spell in Bahrain, assisted by the engineers of the Forward Support Unit.

By the time that was finished, it was almost Christmas, but that didn't stop M34 heading to sea again, this time for Dubai where she spent the New Year with a sizeable proportion of the RN forces east of Suez (*see pages 4-5*).

After another period of mine warfare exercises in the southern Gulf it was time to return to Bahrain and exchange places with Crew 2, fresh from HMS Ledbury (which will be Crew 7's home once they've enjoyed some well-deserved leave).

"The past seven months in the Arabian Gulf have provided a unique operational challenge for the ship and crew," said CO Lt Cdr Phil Dennis.

"I am immensely proud of the resolve and commitment my crew have displayed maintaining a high operational tempo in the unforgiving environment. They should be very proud of all they have achieved."

## Pier review for Type 45s

WORK has begun on a new ammunition facility in Portsmouth Harbour to support the 21st-Century Fleet.

The existing pontoon/pier structure used by frigates and destroyers to load and offload missiles, shells and other ammo dates from the 1920s.

The pier, which extends from the munitions depot at Bridgemary in Gosport, was originally used for coaling, before being converted to ammunition submarines and small warships.

It was overhauled 30 years ago to accommodate larger vessels, but years of exposure to the elements have taken their toll.

With a new facility required to support the Type 45 destroyers and their Aster missiles, builders VolkerStevin are erecting a replacement to the south-east of the existing structure, which will remain in use until 2012.



● Coats and Cardigan... A couple of well-cloaked early-risers on Round Tower watch RFA Cardigan Bay enter Portsmouth Harbour

Picture: LA(Phot) Claire Jones, FRPU

# Cardigan wraps it up

### MISSION accomplished.

That has a very satisfying ring to it.

After three years and two dozen patrols in the northern Gulf, RFA Cardigan Bay finished her extended stint in the region and sailed into Portsmouth Harbour.

Sadly, she didn't bring the Gulf weather with her: it was a cold, drizzly dawn as the amphibious support ship passed Round Tower.

In doing so she brought the curtain down not merely on her lengthy deployment, but one of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary's core missions for much of the past decade.

Cardigan Bay, and before her RFAs Sir Bedivere and Diligence, served as the hub for training Iraqi sailors and marines.

She's also served as a 'lily pad' for Allied operations at the tip of the Gulf – offering fuel, sustenance, support to warships in

these waters and a flight deck for helicopters operating between the ships and Bahrain, the main naval base in the region.

The key role, however, was to prepare Iraqi marines and sailors for the challenging task of defending their territorial waters and their country's two oil platforms (*see below*).

Training is provided by a US-UK team in Iraq's main naval base, Umm Qasr, several hours' sailing up the Khawr abd Allah.

To cut down on that sailing time, Britain has stationed an RFA vessel at the head of the Gulf to maximise training opportunities for the Iraqis and their patrol boats.

Cardigan Bay was designed to support Royal Marines' amphibious operations, disgorging men and matériel on to foreign

shores by landing craft and helicopter.

That was put on the backburner for this mission; the ship served as a base for Iraqi boats, their crews and their tutors and instructors, as well as US Navy fast patrol craft covering the waters around the platforms.

Thanks to her special features, Cardigan Bay was also able to offer some unique training, such as flooding her loading dock to teach the Iraqis sea-survival techniques.

Although the mission for the past three years has been constant, the Bay-class ship's position has not; she's clocked up more than 71,000 miles since she sailed from the UK back in 2008, stopping off in Cyprus on the way home to pick up various military vehicles and ferry them to the mother country.

No RFA is taking her place

in the Gulf; naval leaders have decided that it's one task which has now been completed (although the Umm Qasr team will remain in situ until next year).

Cardigan Bay's Commanding Officer Capt Paul Minter RFA said his ship had "secured her place in the history of Operation Telic and the history of the fledgling Iraqi Navy."

"It has been a demanding but rewarding role to provide support to such an important task, and has demonstrated the versatility of these capable ships."

After a spot of maintenance in Falmouth following her lengthy exertions in the harsh Gulf environment, the ship will return to the fold of the UK's amphibious forces taking part in exercises later this year.

She's due to return to Falmouth in August for a major refit similar to the one completed on her sister Mounts Bay last year.



## Fast forward for Iraqis

NO, IT'S not one of ours, though it is now prowling familiar waters.

This is Swift Patrol Boat P-301 of the Iraqi Navy, pictured here on trials but which has now carried out its first mission in territorial waters around the Al Basrah Oil Terminal (ABOT), the old stamping ground of many a Royal Navy warship in recent years.

And just to emphasise the significance of the event, it was scheduled for Iraqi National Army Day, January 7.

The inaugural patrol will have gladdened the hearts of the Royal Navy personnel who have been training Iraqi sailors in Umm Qasr as part of a coalition team since 2004, most recently specifically geared to the new patrol boat.

A joint Iraqi/Coalition team conducted the crew's final sea assessment, which the men of P-301 passed with flying colours before setting out on their first patrol.

P-301 will be joined by a further 14 of the 35-metre Swiftship-built boats over the coming year.

Capt Gary Sutton, Commanding Officer ITAM Navy (Umm Qasr), said: "Today the Iraqi Navy has made a huge step forward with the first Swiftship patrol of ABOT."

"I am proud of their accomplishment, but I would also like to acknowledge the achievements of the highly-professional training and advisory coalition team in ITAM-N whose training of the Iraqi Navy made this possible."

## Different year same tempo

BY THE time 2011 was one week old, two Royal Navy vessels had already slipped their moorings for lengthy deployments.

Both HMS Echo and HMS Richmond are bound east of Suez.

You won't see the latter till high summer. As for Echo, well Britain will be gearing up for the Olympics by the time she's back.

The survey ship will be away from her home port of Devonport for at least two years as she updates charts and gathers hydrographic data in the Red Sea, Gulf, Indian Ocean, Middle East and the Far East.

To that end she spent the tail end of the old year undergoing extensive training, six weeks of bespoke operational sea training for survey ships, and, just before the festive season, a fortnight of top-up training (which included battle training in addition to testing typical hydrographic and seafaring duties).

In the intervening periods when not under training the ship has been carrying out surveys of UK waters, including a spell in Cardigan Bay.

"2010 was been an extremely challenging – and rewarding year – for Echo," said her XO Lt Cdr Trefor Fox.

"Everyone pulled together to complete the preparations required for such a long and wide ranging deployment."

Thanks to crew rotation, one third of the ship's company will always be home in the UK, either on training courses or on leave, allowing Echo to be away from the mother country for so long.

As for the families of Richmond's sailors, they 'only' have to wait seven months to see the frigate again.

The Type 23 sailed on probably the plum tour-of-duty today's Surface Fleet enjoys: the Far East deployment.

Before she gets there, however, there's the small matter of pirates to deal with.

The deployment begins in earnest off the Horn of Africa supporting the international effort to stamp out brigandage in the Somali basin and aid the delivery of food to Somalia under the World Food Programme.

Once counter-piracy work is done, Richmond heads to the Far East in support of UK military commitments such as the Five Powers Defence Agreement (FPDA), which will see her visiting Indonesia, Brunei and Singapore.





## Saving Ryan's privates

COMMANDOS and sailors on patrol in Afghanistan have better protection against bombs thanks to special underwear being issued.

Some £10m has been spent by Whitehall on 'pelvic body armour' to mitigate the effects of improvised explosive devices – the insurgents' insidious weapon of choice in Helmand which has severely maimed scores of British servicemen.

The new body armour comprises protective underwear and detachable armoured modular trousers.

It balances protection with the necessary comfort and manoeuvrability which troops need on operations – they can wear one or more protective layers depending on the mission.

The first layer is a pair of silk shorts which provides protection against shrapnel.

Some 45,000 pairs have already been delivered to personnel on Operation Herrick and another 15,000 are being issued to men and women about to head to Helmand – such as 3 Commando Brigade which assumes the lead role in Afghanistan this spring.

Troops can wear a second layer of detachable pelvic body armour, which can be rolled up and clipped to a belt and then pulled through the legs to form a protective pouch – meaning mobility is not impeded.

It will be issued to all troops operating 'outside the wire' this spring.

Finally for personnel whose role demands even greater levels of protection – such as those searching for IEDs – there's a third layer covering the upper leg and wider abdominal region.

This last layer is in the final stages of being designed.

Preparing for Helmand mission, pages 15-17

# Gulf debut for Iron Duke

IF IT were not for the sullen sky, this could almost be one of Her Majesty's ships passing Dubai's distinctive luxury waterfront hotel.

In fact it's one of Her Majesty's ships passing Portsmouth's distinctive (but not quite as luxurious) Spinnaker Tower.

Still it won't be long before HMS Iron Duke is within sight of the Dubai landmark.

The frigate was the third RN vessel in a week to depart these shores (see *opposite*), in F234's case a six-month tour of duty in the Gulf.

Iron Duke's taking over from HMS Cumberland, on her very final deployment, as Britain's major warship in the Gulf.

Although the deployment still falls under the Operation Telic banner, the mission has become much more varied in recent years to embrace wider maritime security in the region, rather than 'merely' protecting Iraq's two oil platforms.

The Iron Duck's task over the coming six months include counter-terrorism and anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden, the protection of those platforms, exercises and operations with regional naval forces, and work promoting and supporting Britain's interests in the region.

Iron Duke has served her nation for nearly 20 years, but this will be her first appearance east of Suez.

Structural issues with the ship meant that she's deployed either to the North Atlantic or the South.

As they've now been resolved, courtesy of a year in the UK undergoing maintenance and specialist training, it means that she can head to the Type 23s' typical 'playground'.

Indeed, the ship and her 190 men and women are "perfectly matched" for the tasks which lie ahead according to her Commanding Officer, Cdr Nick Cooke-Priest.

"The experience is not with the ship, it's with the sailors – and 50 or 60 per cent of them have been to the Gulf before, so we sail confident of making a tangible and worthy contribution to security and stability in the region."



Picture: LA(Phot) Aaron Hoare, FRPU East

## Penzance had a 'brilliant deployment'

ENJOYING the surroundings of Gareloch once more after six months on NATO duties around North-West Europe are the men of HMS Penzance.

The minehunter took over from her sister Walney (now paid off) as Britain's representative in NATO's Standing Mine Counter-Measures Group 1 in the Polish port of Gdynia, back in June.

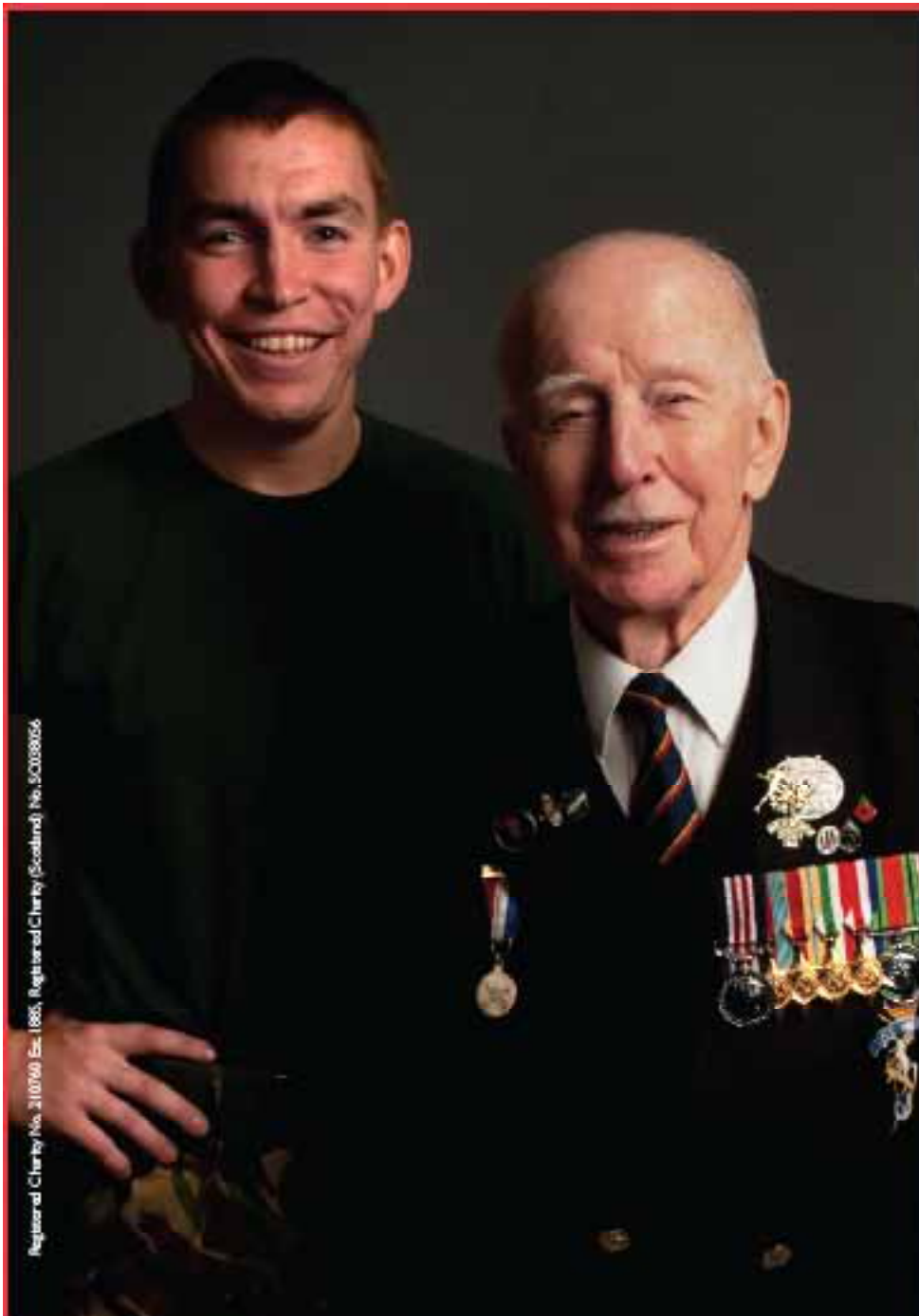
She was immediately thrust into Baltops (a contraction of Baltic Operations) with half a dozen Allied mine warfare vessels, elements of the US Sixth Fleet, plus military firepower from Germany, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Denmark, Poland, France, Sweden and Russia in the Gulf of Finland.

Since then M106 has enjoyed a whistle-stop tour of Europe dealing with dummy mines as well as the legacy of WW1 and WW2 in the waters of France, Poland, Finland, the Netherlands, the Republic of Ireland and Scotland (the NATO group joined larger Allied vessels for October's Joint Warrior war games).

"It was a brilliant deployment but hard work. Luckily we got to stop off at a good few places including Amsterdam, Hamburg and Finland. Still, it's really good to be home and to relax over Christmas," said AB John Kanuy.

His Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Steve Brown added: "The deployment was enormous fun and a hugely rewarding experience – our activities went a long way to making the seas safer."

"The navies who were involved in the NATO group are among the best mine counter-measures nations in the world, and competition was very stiff to claim first place."



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# Ambush is out in the open

NO sooner was she out than she was in again.

HMS Ambush, that is – out of the dock hall and then into the water.

The reluctant submarine, second of the cutting-edge Astute class, failed to roll out of her shed at the end of last year when the low-loader transport system refused to budge.

But the roll-out ceremony went ahead almost as planned, as can be seen from the pictures on this page.

Large crowds gathered in the Devonshire Dock Hall at BAE Submarine Solutions' yard in Barrow to welcome Ambush, the 24th nuclear boat to be built at the end of the Furness peninsula.

Lady Soar, wife of Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Trevor Soar, 'launched' Ambush by releasing a bottle of champagne which duly shattered against the vessel's flank.

Many of the 2,000 or so who watched her have worked on the boat over the past seven years, and will continue to do in the coming months, as well as on the remaining five of class.

"The submarine looks impressive and powerful, however that sleek exterior hides an internal complexity of mind-boggling proportions," John Hudson, BAE Submarine Solutions Managing Director, reminded those sheltering in the 270,000 sq ft dock hall from the cold December wind.

Technically-advanced though she is, Ambush remained hostage to the more modest mechanics of the errant low-loader for a few days after the crowds dispersed, then inched out into the daylight for the first time.

Christmas and the New Year came and went before the next stage was achieved, and Ambush is now in her natural environment.



Thanks to a giant synchro-lift the 7,400-tonne £1bn boat was lowered gently into the water in the early part of January, then moved into the adjacent dock where she will remain firmly secured while the next battery of tests is carried

out and further work done on her interior.

There is a ship's company on watch around the clock from now on, and it is hoped that the Mighty Bush, as she has been dubbed, will put to sea for the first time before this year is out.

Meanwhile, construction on the third vessel of the class – Artful – is continuing, with the command deck in place and work on the hull almost completed.

The fourth boat, Audacious, is also taking shape after the keel was laid almost two years ago.

The ground work for boat five (Agamemnon) has started and materials for boat six (Anson), including her reactor core, have been ordered.

The seventh of the class, which was confirmed in last year's

● *Crowds gather in the Devonshire Dock Hall to see the launch of HMS Ambush (above), among whom were members of her new ship's company (right)*

Pictures: LA(Phot) Stu Hill

● *(Left) Ambush sits high and dry on the low-loader which delayed her emergence from the dock hall*

Picture: Andrew Linnett, DE&S Photographic Manager

Strategic Defence and Security Review, will be named Ajax.

More than 5,000 BAE personnel are working on the hi-tech programme, with a further 1,200 firms across the UK providing specialist parts and equipment.

And joy at her arrival on the scene was not confined to Barrow.

An MOD spokesman said: "Clyde Naval Base, the home of

the UK Submarine Service, will see all the Astute-class vessels berthed alongside along with the remaining Trafalgar-class submarines and the Royal Navy's Sandown-class mine hunters.

"It is always an exciting time when a new vessel is launched, and those working at Faslane are looking forward to welcoming Ambush to her new home."



## High-speed Turbulent

HMS TURBULENT has stormed through a rapid-fire Basic Operational Sea Training (BOST), claiming a coveted 'Very Satisfactory' into the bargain.

CO Cdr Ryan Ramsey set a 27-day deadline, which meant running some serials

simultaneously rather than in sequence, putting extra pressure on the crew.

They rose to the challenge, winning words of praise from the Flag Officer Sea Training staff, which described them as a "well-led and highly-motivated team".

YOU might think that the life of a submariner could be a tad dull.

Day after day on patrol below the waves, the hours marked by the hands of a clock rather than the rising and setting of the sun (though there has not been much sun above the waves over the past few weeks either, admittedly).

But the depths of HMSTriumph might challenge that assumption – variety was very much the order of the day for them.

Last autumn saw the boat acting as a training platform for the latest Perisher course – otherwise known as the Submarine Command Course.

The students led Triumph through a series of demanding exercises, beginning with an intensive 'eyes only' phase, in which numerous surface ships or skimmers harass the boat at speed, with the students using only the periscope to keep Triumph safe.

The pressure is raked up over the remainder of the course, but Lt Cdrs Jeff Filtmore, Dave Filtress and Dan Martyn, along with Lt Cdr Dan Reiss of the US Navy, demonstrated the skills necessary to undertake that most demanding of jobs – commander of a nuclear submarine.

A weekend of training with land forces, delivered by helicopter, was completed before the submarine left the environs of Faslane for open waters off the Scottish coast and Exercise Joint Warrior.

This saw Triumph integrated

# Triumphant progress



● *Troops leap from a Chinook straight into a Scottish loch during exercises with HMS Triumph*

into task group operations and compete in tactical exercises against two other highly-capable submarines, the Norwegian conventional submarine HNoMS Ula and Triumph's sister boat HMS Turbulent.

The culmination of Perisher is the final inshore weekend where the boat steams south from the Hebrides back home to Faslane.

Opposition is provided by several Type 23 frigates and assorted aircraft, and the pressure is raked up as the students are watched closely by VIPs such as Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Trevor Soar and Rear Admiral Submarines Rear Admiral

Mark Anderson.

Of the final inshore weekend, Admiral Soar said: "I was impressed with all I saw during the final stages of Perisher, both capability and people."

He added: "HMS Triumph's support to the Submarine Command Course has been first class and I look forward to visiting the submarine again when possible."

With the newly-qualified captains delivered back to Faslane, Triumph made a surface transit to Den Helder in Holland for a rare foreign run ashore – the first the submarine has had in over six years.

Fixtures were arranged against local rugby and football teams, and a tour organised of the Amsterdam Arena stadium, home of the mighty Ajax football team, while some of the senior rates obtained tickets for an AZ match – the Eredivisie (Dutch premiership) club's stadium was within a two-minute walk of the sailors' hotel in Alkmaar.

Visit Liaison Officer Lt Nick Stone said: "The lads did an excellent job behaving themselves and making the most of every opportunity to have a good time."

"There really was something for everyone and we were hosted impeccably by the Dutch Navy."

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## Normal service resumed

THE Royal Navy's distinctive red-and-grey rescue helicopters have been ranging far and wide from their base at HMS Gannet in the first days of 2011.

The duty Search and Rescue (SAR) Sea Kings headed to all points of the compass with seven calls in seven days in the first full week of the new year, resuming normal high levels of activity after a strangely-quiet Hogmanay period.

Christmas week – December 20-26 – brought the team, based at Prestwick, six emergencies, including one on Christmas Day and two on Boxing Day.

One job was to fly a teenager to hospital after a sledging accident at Ayr, a short hop for the aviators.

They landed on the golf course (pictured) and took the lad to Glasgow for observations, skirting snow showers along the way.

Three were for medical transfers from the Queen of the Hebrides, Islay, and the others included sorties to Lochgilphead and the Isle of Bute.

The following week was eerily quiet across Scotland, the North of England and Northern Ireland.

But the week beginning January 3 saw a resumption in normal business.

Six people were rescued in a total flying time of 13 hours, with sorties including:

The transfer of a casualty who had fallen from a boat in Argyll to hospital in Kilmarnock;

Flying a road traffic victim from Stirlingshire, at the

eastern limit of their 'patch' to hospital in Edinburgh;

A search for two missing persons in Northern Ireland, the western limit on terra firma (their remit could take them hundreds of miles out into the Atlantic).

Saturday January 8 saw the duty crew really stretched, this time from north to south.

At 1.40pm they answered a call to help Fort William police search for and rescue two climbers who had fallen on Ben Nevis, at the extreme north of their coverage area.

This was the first major mountain job with the unit for aircrewman and paramedic Sgt Andy Dixon, on exchange from the RAF, and it wasn't an easy one.

On being winched down, he found the casualties were both French and spoke no English.

They were whisked from the mountain and into the care of an ambulance and mountain rescue team doctor.

After three hours aloft they returned to Prestwick – but an hour later they were off to the southern margin of their territory, the Lake District.

This time they were ready to pluck a climber from Great End on the Scafell massif, but on arrival they found the Keswick mountain rescue team had managed to find and rescue him, and were able to return to base for a well-earned break.

The hard-pressed crew at Gannet – the busiest SAR unit in the UK for the past two years – consisted of pilots Lt George 'Logie' Baird and Lt Andy Ellis, observer Lt Cdr Dave Reese and Sgt Andy Dixon RAF.



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● 42 Cdo's Capt Mackenzie Green sends a situation report as his men storm a Taliban compound near Kajaki in January 2007 – as captured by PO(Phot) Gaz Faulkner's iconic photograph

## Afghan dits wanted

EXPERTS at the nation's most famous military museum want today's sailors and marines to provide their stories of conflict in Afghanistan.

The Imperial War Museum's 'War Story' initiative – which has the backing of the MOD – seeks to record first-hand experiences of 21st-Century combat from men and women who were there.

Their personal accounts from theatre, along with physical items, will help to tell the story of the conflict in Afghanistan and will feature in an exhibition at the museum's London headquarters.

With e-mails and 'blogs' – Internet-based diaries – replacing traditional letters and journals, historians fear that experiences and first-hand accounts of present-day conflict could be lost to future generations.

"We have tonnes of stuff from the World Wars 1 and 2 and the Falkland Islands but we realised there was a huge hole in contemporary material," said project manager Louise Skidmore.

"Most of the material now is digital and we know that it tends to disappear within a couple of years because people lose the data or change computers. Letters aren't just put in an attic like they used to be.

"War Story aims to overcome the short-term electronic nature of modern communication methods and provide current and future generations with a better idea of what serving on Operation Herrick is really like."

Any personnel signing up to the War Story project can use film, art, photography or the written word to capture their thoughts, feelings and experiences during their deployment.

The IWM team is hoping to provide a panoramic sweep of life in Afghanistan, from day-to-day life to combat operations, equipment, working with Allies, downtime, and keeping in touch with loved ones back in the UK.

In addition to these typical experiences of war, the historians are also interested in slightly unusual ephemera – anything from

iPod playlists and favourite video games to unit insignia and unusual gifts people return with.

In the case of the written word, the material can be logged directly on to the War Story website or handed over during post-tour workshops, the first of which involved personnel from 40 Commando who've recently returned from a tour of duty on Operation Herrick 12.

For more information about the project, visit [www.iwm.org.uk/warstory](http://www.iwm.org.uk/warstory) or email [warstory@iwm.org.uk](mailto:warstory@iwm.org.uk).

Personnel should not include material which may breach operational security; if in doubt consult your chain of command.

■ THE museum's Great War galleries are undergoing a £29m revamp which will double the amount of material on display by the time of the 100th anniversary of the conflict's outbreak.

The existing display area features various galleries and cases charting the course of the 1914-18 war, through personal artefacts, uniforms, letters, photographs and films, plus the recreation of a trench.

The new galleries will feature more material, as well as additional interactive/multimedia displays to bring the stories of men and women caught up in WW1 to life.

The revamp is due to be complete by the summer of 2014 and is the first stage of a transformation of the London museum over the next decade.

By 2019, the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of World War 2, the galleries for the second global conflagration will also have been revamped, as well as the museum's enormous glass atrium (home presently to a Polaris missile, a 4in gun from a Great War destroyer and several tanks) and other exhibition spaces and grounds. The whole project is expected to cost around £71m, paid for by the public, businesses and benefactors.



## The ensign flies again

IN THE murk of San Carlos Water, the White Ensign billows once more in the current swirling around HMS Antelope.

It's been four years since the Royal Navy's standard was last fixed to the wreck – courtesy of HMS Liverpool when she was on patrol in the Falklands.

This time it fell to an RN-led team of Service divers to head a few score feet down into the less-than-hospitable waters of San Carlos, the bleak anchorage which provided the springboard for the islands' liberation three decades ago.

Antelope was part of the shield for the invasion force which was subjected to furious Argentine air attack during the first five days of the landings; the confined waters became known as Bomb Alley.

The Type 21 frigate stood guard at the entrance to San Carlos Water on air defence duties. She was struck by two 1,000lb bombs on May 23 1982, which failed to explode, but did kill Std Mark Stephens.

As bomb disposal experts tried to disarm the explosives, one of the bombs triggered killing S/Sgt Jim Prescott and seriously injuring one of his colleagues.

The resulting explosions broke Antelope's back – and provided one of the iconic images of the conflict (above) – the ship eventually settling on the San Carlos sea bed some 80ft below.

Antelope – and other vessels lost during the 1982 war – is a designated war grave and is protected by law; permission has to be sought from the islands' governor to dive on her.

RN warships visiting these waters since have replaced the White Ensign on Antelope, but the demise of ship's divers means the task is performed infrequently.

So a team from the British Forces South Atlantic Islands led by the RN's Lt Roger Malone and including Cdre Rupert Wallace (Commodore Portsmouth Flotilla) and Lt Cdr Adrian Fryer, CO of HMS Clyde – the islands' permanent naval guardian – descended into the cold, murky waters.

"Dropping through the gloom on to the fo'c'sle, we found the wreck encrusted with marine life and upright but with a large list to port," said Lt Malone.

"Despite visibility being so bad that it was impossible to see from one end of her 4.5in gun to the other, the remains of the ensign flown by HMS Liverpool on Landing Day in 2006 were evident, draped over the barrel."

The dive team moved forward and secured the new ensign on to a fairlead on the starboard side to let it float freely in the current.

"The dive was challenging and navigating around the wreck was difficult not least due to the poor visibility but also the damage caused during her sinking and 28 years of her lying on the seabed," Lt Malone added.

"Many areas of the ship are unrecognisable – large holes are appearing in her hull and parts of the superstructure have collapsed in on themselves.

"It was a great honour to be able to take part in this dive and remember those who perished during the conflict. It was an emotional moment watching the White Ensign fly over her again."

With the ensign changed, the divers surfaced where a sea boat was waiting for them from Clyde; its crew 'enjoyed' the Falklands weather while the frogmen were fixing the new flag in place.

Back on board HMS Clyde, there was a service of remembrance for the Type 21, before a wreath of poppies was cast into the silent waters.



● The replacement ensign 'flies' on Antelope



● Flt Lt John Raine approaches the White Ensign left by HMS Liverpool's divers in 2006 over Antelope's 4.5in gun and (below) another shot of the encrusted main gun listing to port

Diving pictures: Lt Roger Malone



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## Keppel topples as Culdrose revamp ends

NOW there will be quite a few airmen who'd relish the chance to do this – take a swing to Culdrose's Keppel Block with a JCB.

But for the air station's Executive Officer there was a slight hint of sadness as he sat behind the wheel of a digger to begin pulling down the accommodation block.

Thirty years ago Cdr Jerry Ovens was among the first people to move into Keppel, built in the early 1970s for trainee officers as part of a massive redevelopment of the Cornish airbase to meet the demands of the day.

That £8m revamp took place when concrete was *de rigueur*, and the architects designing the new-look Culdrose promised they would use techniques to soften the exterior.

Fast forward 35 years and Keppel, like most concrete structures, is a drab grey... and the interior's spartan and basic.

The block is one of the few remaining relics of that 1970s modernisation of Culdrose; what sailors expect of accommodation has moved on once more... such as not wishing to walk half a block to the nearest heads or share shower/bath facilities.

So enter a 20-metre long-reach crushing machine, one XO (guided by a demolition expert) at the controls and Keppel's demise began. Within a few minutes much of the upper floor was lying on the ground.

Come July 2012 a brick block will have arisen on the site with en-suite facilities for its inhabitants; its designers promise that the replacement building will "create a pleasing environment in keeping with the rural surroundings".

When it is complete, it will conclude the current phase of modernisation at Culdrose.

## Snow brings in dough

LAST year's snow may have brought the country to a halt, caused countless broken arms, wrists and legs, and cost the economy £700m...

...but this picture-postcard image of HMS Victory blanketed by the white stuff looks lovely and helped bring in thousands of pounds for Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard.

The heavy snowfall and cold snap at the beginning of 2010 forced staff to curb the opening hours of the site's numerous museums and attractions – and, understandably, kept the public away.

But the sight of the historic buildings – and Nelson's iconic flagship in particular – covered in snow brought photographers out in force.

The result, says dockyard marketer Melissa Gerbaldi, was an estimated £10,000 of free advertising as images of the snow-carpeted dockyard flashed around the world courtesy of print media, websites and specialist magazines.

As for this picture of Victory, well it graced the front of 10,000 Christmas cards, netting upwards of £5k.

With the fresh dump of snow just before the festive period, the photographers returned to the dockyard to update their image libraries and there are plans to produce more Victory Christmas cards for this year's yuletide...

... so that's just £699,985,000 the economy needs to claw back now...

The dockyard ended 2010 on a high with more than 23,500 people filing through its gates for its Victorian Christmas festival – a success which has prompted a re-run from November 25-27 this year.

## Up and at 'em one last time

JUST three months after HMS Chatham paid a final visit to her namesake town, more than 60 members of her ship's company will be in the Medway port to say their farewells on Saturday February 12.

They will close the book on an affiliation going back to the late 1980s when they paraded through the streets of Kent, exercising their right to the Freedom of the Borough of Medway for the final time.

As with her three older sisters, Chatham is being paid off early under October's defence review.

She's already said her goodbyes to the city of her birth, Newcastle – last month the frigate spent four days in North Shields, a few miles along the Tyne from the Swan Hunter yard where Chatham was built from 1986-89, before joining the Fleet the following year.

The freedom parade in Kent – with bayonets fixed and colours flying, all in time to the drum beat of the Royal Marines Band from HMS Collingwood – will begin in Chatham High Street at 11.30am and end at the Medway Council buildings, where officials will host a reception for the sailors.

"Although the day will be tinged with sadness, HMS Chatham has enjoyed more than 20 years of friendship and support from the local population and I'm certain that many happy memories of this special bond will remain long after the ship has gone," said Cdr Simon Huntingdon, the frigate's final Commanding Officer.

His ship was making her final entry into her home port of Devonport – flying a decommissioning pennant – as Navy News went to press.

A formal decommissioning ceremony occurs this month.



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# Jewel purpose

**C**URRENTLY enjoying a spot of training with those nice folk at FOST is the newest warship in the Fleet's inventory, HMS Diamond.

2011 is the year when the Type 45 destroyers come of age. Daring will deploy for the first time, Dauntless will be ready to deploy by the year's end, and Diamond, the third ship in the £6bn programme, won't be far behind her.

D34 begins and ends the year in the hands of the Flag Officer Sea Training (the second 'session' is for Operational Sea Training).

Between those bookends, there are the ship's final sea trials, her formal handing over to the Commander-in-Chief Fleet (the 'in-service date'), commissioning (in May) and the inaugural visit to one of her affiliated cities, Aberdeen (this month); she's also bound with Coventry, although getting 8,000 tonnes of Pusser's grey there might prove tricky.

Other relations to foster for the 190 or so Diamonds this year include the Worshipful Companies of Makers of Playing Cards (who also enjoy strong ties with submarine HMS Turbulent) and Barber-Surgeons – forerunners of today's naval medical branch, who've been going to sea since 1512...

...which pre-dates the first HMS Diamond by about seven decades.

The lineage begins with a Dartmouth cutter which served under Drake and helped defeat the Spanish Armada – the very first Naval battle honour awarded.

The second Diamond was built for Oliver Cromwell and served under the Commonwealth and later the King in the wars of the late 17th Century before she was captured by the French in 1693.

The third, fourth and fifth

Diamonds were fifth-rate frigates which served for most of the 18th Century. No.3 distinguished herself in the Caribbean, No.4 took part in the controversial Battle of Toulon, and No.5 fought in the American Wars of Independence.

The sixth Diamond was around for fewer than two years; an armed merchant brig, she was hired by the Navy from 1793-94.

Diamond No.7 served through the bulk of the Napoleonic Wars, helping to all but eliminate coastal traffic off the Normandy coast and even sneaking into Brest (the French Navy's counterpart of Plymouth or Portsmouth), before being broken up in 1812.

Her successor spent eight years incomplete because Europe was at peace. When finally finished, she served for only three years before being destroyed by an accidental fire in Portsmouth Harbour.

Now to the Far East and the brief career of Diamond No.9, a four-gun schooner hired in 1832 to chase down Malay pirates.

The final Diamond powered by sail served in the Mediterranean and was dispatched to the Black Sea during the Crimean War. She eventually became a training ship and was renamed Joseph Straker.

The first ironclad Diamond (No.11, if you've lost count) was an 1874 corvette which spent almost her entire 15-year career in the Far East and Australia.

Into the 20th Century and a Gem-class cruiser; she spent the bulk of the Great War attached to the Grand Fleet in home waters before being dispatched to the Mediterranean in the final months as a base ship for motor boats.

For four years (1915-19) there



● The tug Bustler accompanies Diamond out of Portsmouth on the destroyer's first trials under the White Ensign

Picture: LA(Phot) Kyle Heller, FRPU East

was also HMS Diamond II, a trawler commissioned by the Navy to tackle the U-boat menace.

The most recent Diamond to see action was No.14, a 1932 Defender-class destroyer which was heavily engaged in the Mediterranean when war came.

She was lost to German dive-bombers while evacuating troops from Greece in April 1941 in company with HMS Wryneck at the cost of more than 900 lives.

The penultimate ship in this long line was the fifteenth Diamond, a 1952 D-class destroyer – hailed in their day as revolutionary warships. She ended her days as a training vessel for engineers in Portsmouth Harbour before being broken up in 1981.

That's not quite the end of the Diamond story, however, for there's the unusual tale of 'HMS Diamond Rock' – which began life as the French sloop Diamant.

She was captured by the British and pressed into service as a supply vessel for a garrison on Diamond Rock off Martinique in 1804-05. The small fort on the outcrop earned the nickname HMS Diamond Rock (although it was never commissioned as such) while the supply boat, renamed Fort Diamond, was retaken by the French after just three months in RN service. The fort itself held out for another year.



Armada.....	1588
Kentish Knock .....	1652
Portland .....	1653
Scheveningen .....	1653
Lowestoft.....	1665
Four Days' Battle.....	1666
Orfordness.....	1666
Solebay .....	1672
Schooneveld.....	1673
Texel.....	1673
Crimea.....	1854-55
Spartivento .....	1940
Mediterranean .....	1940
Malta Convoys.....	1941
Greece.....	1941

Class: Type 45 destroyer  
Pennant number: D34  
Motto: *Honor clarissima gemma* (honour is the brightest jewel)  
Builder: BAE Systems  
Laid down: February 25 2005  
Launched: November 27 2007  
Commissioned: May 2011  
Displacement: 8,000 tons  
Length: 500ft (152m)  
Beam: 70ft (21.2m)  
Draught: 24ft (7.4m)  
Speed: in excess of 30 knots  
Complement: 190 (can accommodate up to 235)  
Propulsion: 2 x Rolls Royce WR21 gas turbine-driven alternators; 2 x Wartsila diesel generators;  
2 x Alstom electric propulsion motors  
Armament: Sea Viper anti-air missile system featuring Aster15 and Aster30 missiles held in SYLVER launcher; 1 x 4.5in Mk8 main gun; 2 x 30mm guns; Surface Ship Torpedo Defence system  
Helicopter: 1 x Lynx or 1 x Merlin

## HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.82 – Sir Winston Spencer Churchill

**THE date:** Saturday January 30, 1965.

**The location:** Whitehall, London.

**The occasion:** the final chapter in the rich story of Sir Winston Churchill, the last commoner to receive a state funeral.

A 142-strong detail of sailors hauls the heavy lead-lined coffin of the Former Naval Person on a gun carriage, flanked by Royal Air Force personnel and Guardsmen in this rare colour image of the occasion from the photographic archive of the Imperial War Museum.

For three days the wartime premier's body had lain in state in Westminster Hall; more than 320,000 people filed past it to pay their last respects.

Sir Winston's health had been failing for several years; a frail figure had defiantly given his trademark V for victory sign at the window of his London home as crowds gathered to celebrate his 90th birthday in November 1964.

By January 1965, the spark of life was almost extinguished. On the tenth he suffered a stroke and spent the remaining 14 days of his life in a coma.

Prayers were offered. Harold Wilson and the Archbishop of Canterbury cancelled public engagements. For several days Britain was in limbo. The news brought the country to a standstill.

But it was not unexpected. Shortly after ascending the throne, the young Queen made it clear that when Churchill died he was to receive a funeral "on a scale befitting his position in history".

What followed were a dozen years of planning – the last draft of the elaborate arrangements was completed just two months before Sir Winston died – for an operation unofficially codenamed Operation Hope Not.

And so when the inevitable but unwanted day of the funeral finally came, everything was arranged to the minute.

Ten monarchs and heads of state and representatives from more than 100 nations attended proceedings which reached their



photographic memories

climax at St Paul's Cathedral, Chief of Defence Staff and former First Sea Lord Admiral of the Fleet Lord Mountbatten was among the pallbearers.

Three thousand mourners filled St Paul's. Millions more watched proceedings on television; the BBC had 40 cameras covering the progress of the cortège, the service, the launch carrying the coffin the short distance up the Thames from Tower Pier to Festival Pier and transfer to train from Waterloo for burial in Oxfordshire.

We could – and believe some people have done so – devote a book or two to the wartime premier, or even his leadership of the Royal Navy in two global conflagrations.

Churchill's Naval record is patchy. He advocated risky campaigns – the Dardanelles and Norway – which proved to be disastrous, both for the Navy and the nation.

But what was never in doubt was his passion for the Senior Service, "Britain's sure shield". He helped drag the Admiralty into the 20th Century, nurtured the fledgling naval air arm (learning to fly in the process), advocated the 15in gun and oil over coal as the fuel of choice for the Fleet.

A generation later, when appointed First Lord of the Admiralty – the political figure responsible for the Navy – for the second time the legendary signal 'Winston is back' flashed around the Fleet.

He found the Senior Service in 1939 to be "the finest tempered instrument of naval war in the world".

In turn, *Navy News'* editor of the day, Lt H R Berridge, eulogised that the Royal Navy had as much trust in its former leader as he had in it. The Fleet would, he said, "always remember him. He takes his place with all the other naval heroes – Nelson, Blake, Collingwood, Drake, Rodney, and so many others."

■ THIS photograph (RAF-T 5119) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at [www.iwmcollections.org.uk](http://www.iwmcollections.org.uk), by emailing [photos@IWM.org.uk](mailto:photos@IWM.org.uk), or by phoning 0207 416 5333.





● Merseysailors, led by AB(Sea) 'Doris' Day, try mountain biking in a Scottish forest

# Fire, flood and hill-walking...

IT'S Operational; Sea Training, but not as we know it...

For the majority of the Fleet, OST is a necessary evil, complete with long hours, endless cleaning, and a drill for every conceivable scenario.

Unless, of course, you are part of the Fisheries Protection Squadron.

This year HMS Mersey had a new dimension added to her OST – Adventurous Training.

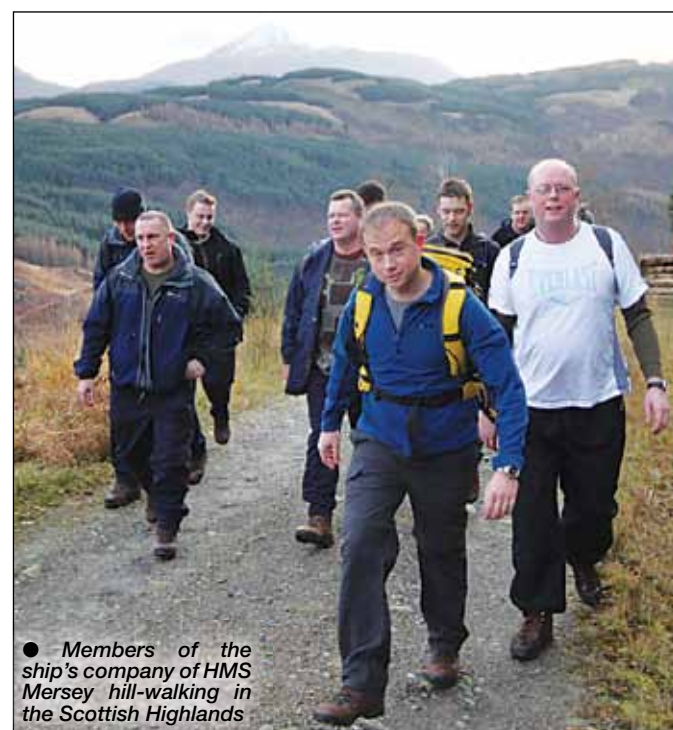
Mersey, like her sister River-class patrol vessels, operates a three-watch manning system, meaning that whilst the ship is at sea a third of her ship's company is on leave.

In order to replicate realistic manning demands, one of the three watches was landed for three days of AT, so whilst the 'on' watches were having fun fighting fire, floods and other exciting OST exercises, the 'off' watch didn't get the chance to put their feet up.

They threw themselves into hill walking, mountain biking, skiing and rock climbing, courtesy of Clyde Naval Base's well-equipped AT section.

Mersey's Executive Officer Lt Rob Lamb thought that the new addition to the program "made the OST serials far more realistic for the ship's company, as it emphasised the importance of the Command Aim in prioritising man (and woman) power to meet the needs of the mission."

A significant proportion of the landed watches were experiencing some of these activities for the first time, whilst for others this was a



● Members of the ship's company of HMS Mersey hill-walking in the Scottish Highlands

useful consolidation and exchange of new ideas.

Every member of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines is allowed a minimum of a week a year for AT, which is recognised by the Ministry of Defence as an important tool in the personal development of an individual, leading to investment in many high-class facilities such as the

centre at Faslane.

Details can be found in JSP 419 Joint Service Adventurous Training (JSAT) Scheme.

Mersey gained an almost unheard assessment at OST of "Very Satisfactory" overall, then dropped in on the city of Glasgow for a well-earned stand-off prior to returning to fishery protection duties.

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INSPIRING LEARNING



# Higher speed Lynx



picture: la(photo) dave jenkins, frpu east

**A**BOUT to rapid rope on to the deck of HMS Cornwall, a Royal Marine Commando casts a line out of the side of the ship's Lynx.

It's yet another drill for the Fighting 99 as she attempts to bring peace and security to the often hostile waters of the Somali Basin.

This is Cornwall's second pirate-chasing deployment in 12 months (it will be her last, too, as all the 22s are to go under last autumn's defence review).

With fewer vessels and, it seems, barely a lessening of commitments around the globe, the destroyer and frigate fleet is being pushed harder than ever as the gap between deployments shortens.

*They're pushing the ships hard* is a not uncommon remark in the Navy News offices.

We rather forget that *they're pushing the ship's flights hard too*.

Luckily, it's something the flight's parent unit, 815 Naval Air Squadron, doesn't forget.

Far from it.

It's changing the way it does its business to keep up with the tempo of the destroyers and frigates which rely on its helicopters.

Not too long ago, ships could go up to 18 months between deployments; these days they can be sent away after fewer than six months back home in Portsmouth or Devonport.

If they're cutting down on the turnaround time between deployments, so too their flights.

"If that's what's needed, we will meet it," says 815's ops officer Lt Cdr Anthony Johnson. "It's all about the front line."

The Yeovilton-based Lynx unit proclaims itself to be the largest helicopter squadron in the world (300 or so technicians and maintainers, four dozen aircrew, a good two dozen aircraft).

Each ship's flight demands one Lynx and a team of ten men and women: two aircrew, one aircraft controller, seven engineers/technicians.

So on paper meeting its core tasks should be straightforward, given 815's size.

The squadron is expected to uphold at least half a dozen standing commitments, providing flights for:

- ✦ **Telic duties in the Gulf;**
- ✦ **Calash (maritime security in the Indian Ocean);**
- ✦ **NATO Maritime Group 2 (increasingly deployed east of Suez on counter-piracy work);**
- ✦ **Atlantic Patrol North;**
- ✦ **Atlantic Patrol South.**

In addition to ship's flights, 815's expected to support operations in home waters:

- ✦ **there are always two Lynx ready to scramble on counter-terrorism duties;**
- ✦ **one Lynx is always available should the Fleet Ready Escort – the on-call destroyer or frigate – need to put to sea.**

So that should account for, say, eight flights. Er, no.

A snapshot of late 2010 gives an idea of just how many 815 men and women (plus Lynx) are out there:

- ✦ **Telic: Somerset and Cumberland;**
- ✦ **Calash: Cornwall;**
- ✦ **NATO: Montrose;**
- ✦ **APT (North): Manchester;**
- ✦ **APT (South): Portland (returning); Gloucester (outward bound).**
- ✦ **One Lynx was on the back of HMS Daring on her mini-deployment to the USA;**
- ✦ **212 Flight – traditionally attached to HMS Endurance – went with HMS Ocean to South America.**

As for those standing commitments, each one requires not one but three flights each: one actually deployed, one at home in the UK recovering from its exertions, a third in preparation for deploying with a ship.

And we've not mentioned other vessels on exercise or work-up round the UK – Joint Warrior, Operational Sea Training.

Nor does the 815 workload stop there. The

squadron has offered to support the UK mission in Afghanistan – the overriding task for all Armed Forces at present – forward air controllers and taking the place of Apache gunships (very much in demand in Helmand...) during pre-deployment exercises for air and ground units about to head to theatre.

Britain's

by training

the place of Apache gunships (very much in demand in Helmand...) during pre-deployment exercises for air and ground units about to head to theatre.

"At any one time there are about a dozen flights away – perhaps two thirds of the squadron is committed," says Lt Cdr Johnson.

"We work the aircraft hard, we work the people hard. We don't say 'no'. We can always manage – it's better to show that you are busy."

**C**URRENTLY in the regeneration phase is 207 Flight, preparing to join the Fortress of the Sea this summer.

HMS Edinburgh's likely to be a little rusty when it comes to aerial operations – she's been out of action for months courtesy of a £17.5m refit.

But 207 doesn't simply arrive on board the day the destroyer heads out of Portsmouth on deployment.

The Flight's been talking to – and working with – the Type 42 since the end of 2010.

"You build up strong ties with your ship," says Lt Ben Dando, flight observer. "You become a well-oiled machine."

His flight is among the last to convert from the venerable Mk3 Lynx (which can't go east of Suez – it doesn't have the latest communications equipment or defence aid suite) to the Mk8 (in very simplistic terms it's the one with all the gubbins on the nose such as the Gucci camera kit).

The Mk8 is the final variant of the helicopter before the Fleet Air Arm moves on to the next-generation Lynx, Wildcat, from 2015 (although 700W get to 'play' with it in 12 months' time...).

Progress with technology means that Wildcat will be available for roughly 30 per cent longer than the current breed of Lynx.

Right now, however, the Mk8 remains a very potent bit of kit.

"You have gone from Swordfish-esque technology, putting plots on acetates, working by torchlight, to hi-tech," says Cdr Paul 'Butch' Bowers, 815's out-going CO.

And he knows a thing or two about Lynx. He's been flying them for 20 years.

"In a Mk3 you could manage six plots, in a Mk8 you can plot everything from Portland to the Isle of Wight."

"Lynx crews are as busy as they have ever been, it's just that with the Mk 8, the system does it a lot more quickly."

In fact, it can do much more than it did three or four years ago when there was a real mish-mash of variants of Lynx: older Mk3s, newer Mk8s some with night-vision kit, some without. "There was a lot of juggling different aircraft," says Cdr Bowers.

These days 815 is much more homogenous.

And that's not just good for the squadron and good for the Fleet, it also means the turn-around time for flights can be reduced dramatically.

Although a deployment typically lasts six months, the whole training and work-up package for the flight typically takes 15 months.

The 18-week 'regeneration' package – which includes top-up training, courses, pre-deployment training (previously known as OPTAG) – has now been pared down to five to nine weeks, thanks in part to the demise of Mk3s and hence no requirement for conversion any more.

There's a change too in platforms. Having worked with 22s and 42s since the 1970s, both of these will soon be gone and the maritime Lynx will operate almost exclusively from the back of Type 23s and 45s – although really, they're not overly bothered what the vessel is.

"There are plus points and minus points to every type of ship – but really it's the ship's company who make it," said senior maintenance rating CPO Pete Collins.

"That said, no-one is going to turn down an RFA..."

En suite cabins. Funny that...

"There are some people on the squadron who don't enjoy life on a 'small' ship," says CPO Si Barson, senior maintenance rating with the flight on HMS Chatham's most recent deployment.

"But 95 per cent of the guys enjoy it – you tend to see the same faces coming around."

And why not? For, as Cdr Bowers tells each flight before they embark on deployment: "You are so lucky, you have the best job."



# Gore values



## DON'T worry. It's not a real casualty.

But the mangled lower leg, fake blood – and a bit of (over)acting – make it seem very real.

And in a couple of months it will be very real for 200-plus naval medics when they deploy with 3 Commando Brigade to Afghanistan this spring.

The surgeons and medical assistants have spent the past six months preparing for their latest tour of duty in Helmand, forming the Close Support Medical Regiment, drawn from Royal Naval and Army units across the UK.

That training neared its climax in icy conditions at RM Chivenor in January, where the medics were joined by musicians from the Royal Marine Band Service who'll serve as ambulance drivers and casualty handlers (the modern term for stretcher bearers) and amputees to play the parts of the injured.

Also thrown into the mix were personnel from RNAS Yeovilton, commandos from CTCRM in Lympstone, 42 and 45 Commandos, 29 Commando Regiment RA, sailors from Portsmouth and Devonport, and medical staff from Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine in Birmingham.

Oh, and the Crabs turned up too, in the form of Chinook helicopters... as MA Morwenna Nichols discovered.

Covered in mud from crawling over the sodden North Devon terrain, impeded by her SA80 rifle, the young medic from MDHU Derriford struggled to communicate with comrades and a 'casualty' as a Wocka Wocka rumbled overhead carrying a Medical Emergency Response Team.

"There's only so much you can learn in a hospital," says MA Nichols for whom this will be her first deployment.

"I am looking forward to going to Afghanistan – this is exactly what we have trained for as medical assistants.

"I am keen to go to use my full skills, but I know it will be tough."

Beyond the very immediate task of trauma treatment, training for the latest Operation Herrick roulement has also involved paediatrics – the medical teams provide health care and advice to Helmand's civilian populace – and drawing up fitness and nutritional advice for the troops on the ground to improve their general health.

Each person in the medical regiment will spend two weeks training which reaches a climax with an intensive 40-hour final exercise.

"The medics will be going out on patrol on the front line in the arduous and dangerous conditions where they may have to defend themselves and their patients from the Taliban, so training has included learning basic infantry as well as medical skills," explained Lt Cdr Mark Middleton, Officer Commanding A Squadron.

"The training's peaking with them putting it all together – they have been practising their existing trauma skills in a stressful environment where we make it as realistic as possible.

"Ultimately their presence will give the combat troops the confidence to do their job properly knowing they will be looked after by skilled medics. In turn, the troops will look after the medics and ensure they are safe."

Picture: LA(Phot) Nicki Wilson, FRPU West

Realistic training for 45 Commando in Norfolk, see overleaf

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● A member of Mortar Troop, 45 Cdo, cleans out a weapon during an exercise

Pictures: LA(Phot) Andy Laidlaw, 45 Cdo

# (Middle

**NORFOLK. Helmand Province. Not much difference there, then.**

Well, not when you are patrolling a thriving bazaar, meeting Afghan elders and keeping an eye open for insurgents, all within a few miles of Thetford.

The Afghan village is part of the Stanford Training Area in East Anglia, a key element in the pre-deployment programme for troops bound for Helmand.

And so it was that some 600 Royal Marines from Arbroath-based 45 Commando headed south to undertake an arduous training exercise in Norfolk to help prepare them for a likely operational deployment to Afghanistan.

Exercise Pastun Panther was designed to test the essential skills that are required for operations in Helmand, and the 30,000-acre site – known as STANTA – provided the best environment in which to do this.

STANTA boasts an urban Middle East complex and a full mock-up Afghan village, built to the standards of a professional film set and opened in 2009.

The bazaars, shops and houses are all populated by real Afghan people and other volunteers playing the role of the local populace, insurgents and the occasional injured soldier or civilian – those roles may be played by amputees to make the situation even more realistic.

From the call to prayer heard across a busy marketplace to the noise of a bustling family home and the tension of a patrol in a network

of claustrophobic alleyways with high walls, the areas provide a complex and realistic way to train troops and test their skills under demanding conditions.

The fertile green zones of Helmand have been recreated, complete with deep irrigation ditches full of water, providing challenging obstacles for the Royals as they patrolled.

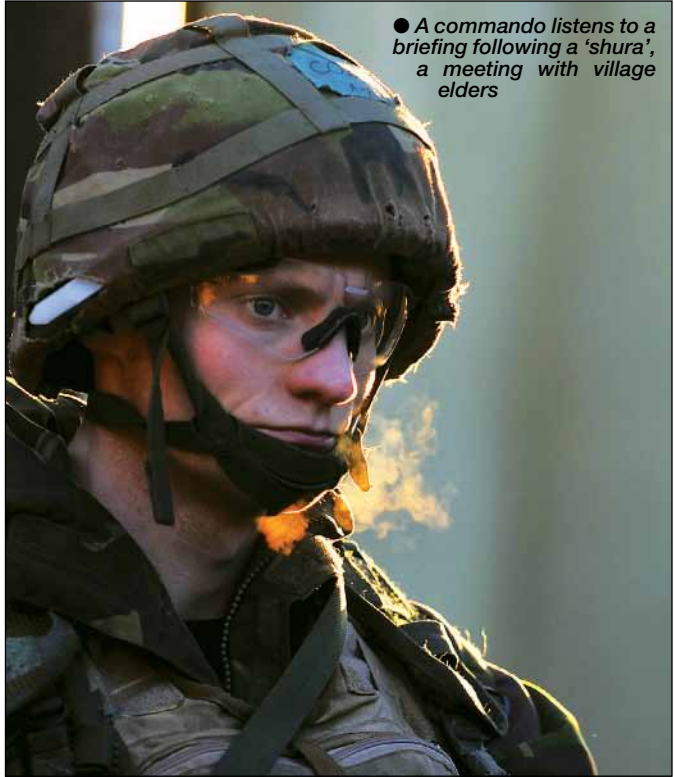
Realistic Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) have been constructed, with each one serving as a base for one of the four rifle companies of the Commando.

Throughout the exercise the Marines were tested on the different scenarios that they would face in Afghanistan.

Every opportunity to practise working alongside the Afghans was seized, and operations were conducted jointly with Afghan National Army/Police counterparts.

Meetings or *shuras* with local elders were conducted regularly, providing the officers and men of 45 Cdo with some valuable cultural experiences.

Aircraft were also flown over to provide fast air support to the companies or to respond to

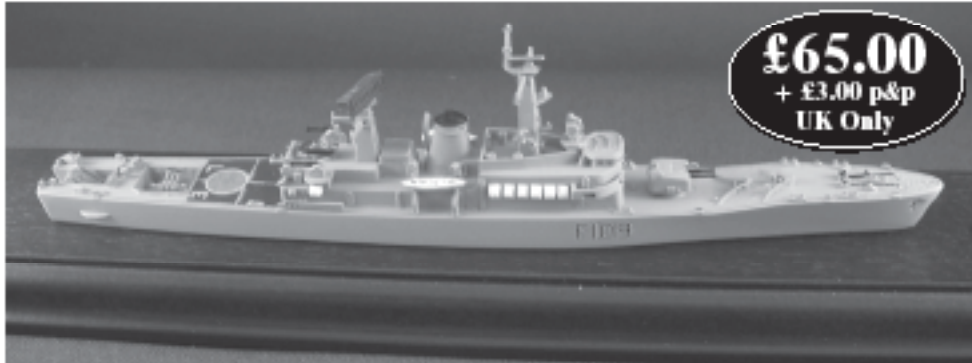


● A commando listens to a briefing following a 'shura', a meeting with village elders

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● A member of X-Ray Coy peers through the sights of his light machine gun



# le) East Anglia



● A 'Vallon man' on Operation Barma (using a metal detector to ensure a safe path) leads colleagues from X-Ray Coy on patrol

medical emergencies within the exercise scenarios.

The commandos also had use of a fleet of Afghan-specific vehicles, allowing them to familiarise themselves with the exact kit currently used in theatre.

The Commanding Officer of 45 Cdo, Lt Col Oliver Lee, said: "This was an excellent week of realistic training.

"As always, the Commando rose admirably to every challenge it faced.

"We all drew great benefit from a tremendous training package."

The Stanford Training Area is used for both live firing and non-firing training for 350 days each year, with around 80,000 troops using the area annually.

In total some 43 square miles (124 sq km) is available for Service training, representing more than two per cent of the county of Norfolk.



● A Royal in the Ops Room monitors cameras which ring a Forward Operating Base



● A Royal keeps his machine gun dry during a river crossing

● Members of Mortar Troop, 45 Cdo, go through standard operating procedures with their weapon



● Two commandos on patrol make contact with the 'enemy'

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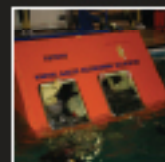
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## Dream job

Nick, who has regularly appeared on the TV and radio said: "After 15 years combining the study of naval history with a museum career, coming to Portsmouth to take on such a varied and exciting role really is a dream come true for me."



Except that these new screens are saving the Fleet, and therefore

Or you can have one run off on PVC canvas in about 15

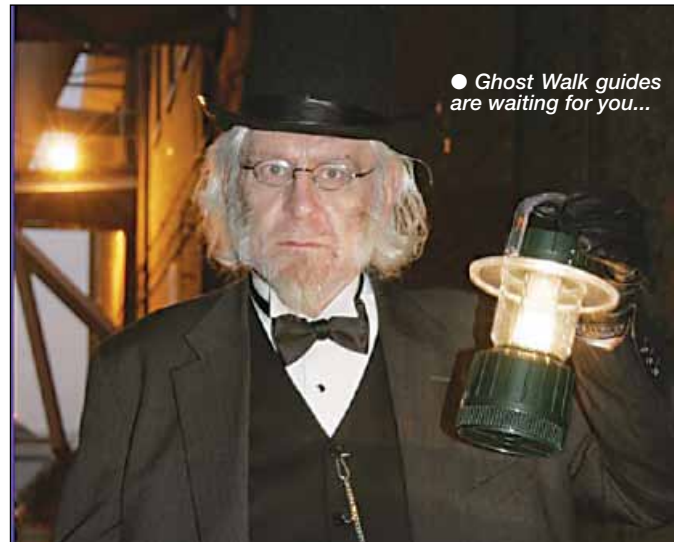
## The new screens and buoys

"The skills are still here, if you're away and you have to repair one of these, then you'll have to do it manually," he adds.

# Wraith rovers return




The minimum age is 13 years and teenagers must be accompanied by an adult at all times.




Other nights are available  
on request for youth groups

# Theatre stages Alliance benefit

For more details on the Alliance appeal, see [www.submarine-museum.co.uk](http://www.submarine-museum.co.uk) or call 023 9251 0354 ext 244.



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# Routine business

**T**HE festive season is a time for giving.

The good folk of RFA Diligence gave their comrades aboard HMS Cornwall the gifts of fuel and sustenance.

And in return the Fighting 99 gave Diligence lots of sewage.

Still, as they say, it's the thought that counts.

Warships are used to replenishing at sea from the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, but Cornwall chose to 'raft up' for a day with Diligence in the Gulf – bringing the two ships side-by-side.

The tricky evolution is made easier thanks to the repair ship's series of thrusters, her pitch propeller and some hi-tech computer wizardry which choreograph all the propulsion.

The system – known as DP, or dynamic positioning – allows Diligence to manoeuvre forwards, astern or sideways with extreme precision. She can also 'hover', holding a specific position to within an accuracy of 50cm (20in) in winds up to Force 5.

It's all controlled by a joystick on a movable control panel on the bridge – a long lead allows the person in charge to wander around the bridge, or on to the bridge wing.

For the rafting, Diligence's navigator was in charge, stopping the repair vessel parallel to the frigate after judging her drift rate. Then Diligence slipped sideways with large rubber fenders out, and as the two vessels touched, wires and lines were passed then tightened and the RFA and HMS were bound.

And then it was time for the auxiliary to show off. For the next couple of miles, Diligence decided to 'side tow' Cornwall, before letting her DP system hold the duo in a hover.

Diligence offered her extensive repair facilities to the Type 22 frigate, which is carrying out anti-piracy patrols east of Suez, as well as topping up Cornwall's fuel tank and providing fresh water, while the warship offloaded some sullage into the RFA's slop tanks.

The Royal Marines took advantage of

Diligence's presence to carry out some boarding training, conducting searches of the ship and working with the repair ship's RN force protection team, P Squadron.

After all that exercise, a spot of tea was in order. Suitably satiated, the ships parted company and resumed their separate duties.

When not enjoying tea and stickies with Diligence, the Fighting 99 has been dividing her time between protecting merchantmen and sharing her expertise with Allied navies in the region.

Cornwall is the command ship for Combined Task Force 151 – a conglomeration of 25 nations committed to stamping out illegal activities on the high seas – currently led by Pakistan's Cdre Abdul Aleem.

He and his staff are making use of the Type 22's command facilities to co-ordinate the warships and aircraft monitoring activity in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Oman.

In Cornwall's case, the mission at present is focused on the 'Internationally Recognised Transit Corridor', an invisible sea lane covering around 5,000 square miles of ocean in the Gulf of Aden which shipping is advised to use because it is here that Allied warships offer protection.

"A routine quickly developed," Cornwall's Commanding Officer Cdr David Wilkinson explained.

"The ship's Lynx conducted daily surface search sorties to look for suspicious activity and some routine boarding operations, against the backdrop of an on-going internal training programme to maintain our levels of readiness and the gradual increase in understanding of the patterns of activity around the region."

To keep the rest of the ship's company on their toes, there have been mock galley fires and helicopter crashes on deck to contend with, some 4.5in gunnery, lots of training for the boarding team including fast roping practice, and a chance to exchange

personnel with the American destroyer USS Momsen.

At the same time, the F99's boarding team have built up a much better understanding of local fishermen's routines and ways of working by carrying out several 'assurance visits' – assuring the fishermen that the Allies are here to help.

So far, Cornwall's not come across any pirates... well, apart from those in her own mess decks.

The frigate staged a 'pirate night' on the flight deck complete with walking the plank, a selection of 'smelly pirate hookers' and a variety of piratical costumes ranging from the traditional to the more modern, complete with convincing RPGs.

Christmas was spent at sea in the protective corridor (although the tradition of officers serving dinner on December 25 was, of course, upheld).

At least New Year was spent alongside... although the Omani port of Salalah isn't quite Dubai (as enjoyed by many RN warships in the region – see pages 4-5).

Refreshed and re-stored, Cornwall was back at sea three days into 2011... and straight into counter-piracy boardings.

On the first day out of Salalah Cornwall encountered a suspicious-looking dhow... so the boarding team was dispatched.

It turned out to be a genuine fishing boat which was coming to the end of a month at sea.

"This was not a wasted boarding," Cdr Wilkinson explained.

"Firstly it allowed us to gauge how positively our operations are viewed by locals, who are simply trying to earn a living from the sea.

"Also my team gained a very useful insight into the routines, equipment and way of life for a typical fishing dhow in these waters – all of which is very beneficial for our understanding of the area."

With a night-time 20mm shoot complete and a top-up of fuel courtesy of the USNS Amelia Earhart, the Fighting 99 continues to prowl.







**NAVY divers do some of the most dangerous work in the Service, but much of it goes unseen and unsung.**

Why the low profile? Well, for one thing, working underneath the sea in zero visibility doesn't make for good pictures.

There are few photographs of divers at work, few books about them, and no memorable

film sequences, like the famous wartime footage of the Swordfish attacking the Bismarck, or ships in the Falklands campaign.

Then there's the nature of the job. Clearance diving is not just a wartime job, with all the publicity that follows. It is a daily tasking, although an equally hazardous one.

The Navy divers' main job is to carry out mine disposal on MCMs, and underwater engineering on ships and submarines. But they also work closely with civil authorities.

Day after day in peacetime, naval divers defuse explosive ordnance fetched up on beaches or fishing nets, mount search and recovery operations, and support maritime counter terrorism.

For all these reasons, divers (apart from the mysterious Buster Crabbe) have never had the public profile of pilots or skimmers. Even submariners probably get more publicity than they do. But they don't keep a modest profile out of choice.

"Divers aren't shrinking violets," said Cdr Tom Russell, Commanding Officer of the (Joint Service) Defence Diving School at Horsea Island, in Portsmouth.

He added: "In fact I've never seen such a bunch of people who like to be in the limelight."

Over the past year, Navy clearance divers have been taking their place alongside Army colleagues in Afghanistan, (as reported in *Navy News*) working with the Joint Force Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group.

But people looking at the pictures of the small team of Navy divers in Helmand Province might not realise which Service they belong to.

"We are a very small team and we tend to get on with the job and dip under the horizon," explained Cdr Russell.

"Unless a World War 2 bomb shuts down the Mersey, as happened a few years ago, we tend to stay below the radar."

He added: "When we blister ourselves onto other units and work in places like Afghanistan we don't look like sailors, and so we lose our identity."

Their public profile may not be high, but divers are a small and elite team.

If public recognition isn't the spur, there must be a magnet for a young sailor to want to spend his (or her) career under water, particularly in the dark, cold and murky waters in which most Navy divers work – deployments to the sports divers' playgrounds of clear,



blue, warm seas are sadly rare, and getting even rarer.

It becomes clear, visiting the Defence Diving School, that the magnet is the challenge of joining an exclusive club.

There is no such thing as a half-hearted military diver. Passing all the courses requires huge determination, plus physical fitness similar to a commando's.

"The Able Seaman Diver course is, without doubt, the most physically and mentally challenging ratings' course in the Royal Navy," said Cdr Russell.

He explained: "When they first arrive, everyone sets the highest of standards and we take our training very seriously."

"We're a very small, tight-knit community, so we all work for each other. Our team is something people want to join, when they see it they work doubly hard to try and get in."

The first step for potential Navy divers is to spend two-and-a-half days at Horsea island on a PEDa – Pre-Entry Diving Assessment, in which they will do one 'try-dive' in a freshwater tank, and a second in Horsea Lake – in between series of tough physical training circuits to test their fitness.

This gives them a chance to experience life at the Defence Diving School and find out if they are really suited to the job – and for the school in turn to assess them.

Although the course is not pass or fail, promising candidates get a recommendation, which allows them to go to the next stage.

"What qualities are we looking for? We're looking for people who have get-up-and-go, who are self-starters, determined, bright, and focused on what they want to achieve," said Cdr Russell.

He added: "Society's changed since I joined the Navy. We're in an age of computers and home entertainment, where fewer kids are getting dirty playing out of doors and falling out of trees."

"We tend to get the ones who are still doing that, who fall out

of trees, bounce hard and dust themselves down.

"They're still out there – and standards have not fallen. The ones who pass are just as good as they ever were."

It also takes strong nerves to deal with bomb disposal. Cdr Russell said: "I think at the beginning you're imbued with a whole load of courage, because in your late teens and 20s you think you are invincible."

"In later life you realise you are not, and then it requires a different sort of courage."

He added: "But there is no greater buzz than walking up to a large piece of ordnance to try to dispose of it. You don't know what it is, you don't know where it is, but you feel alive – really alive!"

"You have one, single-minded purpose – to disarm it. Is there an element of thrill seeking? Yes – I have to admit there probably is."

The trainee divers recommended at the PEDa go to HMS Raleigh, where they complete Phase One of basic training along with other recruits, before their next hurdle, week one of diving course, Initial Diving Training Selection week.

During this initial week they undertake intensive physical training sessions, including wet and dry circuits, a mud run and a night dive.

The physical standards required to pass are way above the RN Physical Fitness Test; all divers must successfully pass the Divers Physical Fitness Test (DPFT) which requires a mile-and-a-half run in under 10 minutes 30 seconds; 16 dips, eight heaves and 40 sit-ups, the latter in under a minute.

The mud run is famous among divers as one of the toughest tests of strength, stamina, and above all a determination to keep going in unpleasant circumstances.

Between Horsea Island and Portchester there are, (conveniently) tons of mud when the tide is out.

The hopeful divers on the PEDa will find themselves doing regular mud runs if they get onto the ABs course, where trainees have to get across from Horsea to Portchester, a distance of half a mile.

It may not sound far, but there is no easy way to travel across deep mud – every step saps the strength.

And the distance can be further when an absent-minded instructor finds he's forgotten something and has to send them back to get it...

The infamous mud run is not a punishment, or a test of grit, but a necessary skill.

Lots of wartime ordnance gets washed up on to mud, and a clearance diver has to learn how to reach it, frequently walking through several hundred yards of thick mud with 55lb of equipment on his back.

Only the best ten who undertake the Initial Diving Training Selection week start the Able Seaman Diver course the following Monday.

In this 22-week course the students learn first aid, underwater engineering, sea bed searches, recompression chamber training, and – finally – two intensive weeks of Explosive Ordnance Disposal





# toughest course

Training.

They are taught to operate three sets of diving equipment, starting with the SABA (Swimmers' Air Breathing Apparatus), which goes to a depth of 30 metres, and progressing to the Open Space Diving System, for depths of down to 50 metres, and the Clearance Divers' Life Support Equipment, a mixed gas system used for the really deep dives of 60 metres.

It's a demanding course with a drop-out rate of about 25 per cent.

Specialised and highly-technical classroom training is alternated with bouts of exercise to keep the divers alert and used to working when they are overwhelmingly tired – a realistic foretaste of what they can expect when they are doing it for real.

One of the ways of keeping the trainee divers on their toes is the shout of 'AWKWARD!' – at sea it is a recognised term to muster the team when the ship has been attacked by underwater swimmers.

At the school it is used as a quick-dress routine, sometimes almost daily. The trainees have to stop whatever they are doing, rush to the lake's edge and into their wetsuits, and jump into the water.

In the winter the water is freezing, in a hot summer the frequent circuits around the lake in wetsuits can be extremely tiring. It's easy to see why physical fitness is crucial.

Cdr Russell said: "Our young divers want to attain a goal, and we make it quite difficult for them to attain it."

"They need huge determination, and it's quite difficult to maintain that when it's 2am, it's minus two degrees on the surface, you've been under the water for an hour, and you come straight back up recharge your set and get back in the water."

He added: "You have to really want to be part of this team, and push yourself, physically and mentally, to join it."

"Everyone's fit, there are very few colds, or ailments."

The enthusiasm for 'phys' makes the school an enjoyable posting for the PTIs – it's one of those units where everyone shares their enthusiasm.

LPT Pete Sapcey (pictured top left), who joined the school last May, said: "This is one of the fittest units I've ever worked in."

"I knew what divers were like because I'd worked in ships, but I didn't realise how good the school would be."

"The divers are working underwater for long periods with heavy hydraulics, and they're required to be in good condition all year round."

"Everyone supports PT and adventurous training, and everyone's up for sport and phys. I think it's the best job I've ever had as an LPT."

He added: "When I first got the draft I wasn't too sure what it would entail, but I soon realised it's more than taking wet circuits and phys with the divers – it's also integrating the school into the regional sports teams."

In the last year the school has shone at boxing, squash, rowing and a cliff and chasm competition,

a gruelling race with a heavy barrel around a series of obstacles.

One reason it has such a good sporting record is that it can enter mixed Army and Navy teams for events. Although it is a Navy establishment, part of the Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood, it trains 200 Army and Navy divers a year.

In fact the development of military diving owes more to the Army than the Navy, as the father of military diving (whose portrait has pride of place on the staircase at the diving school) was a Royal Engineer, Gen Sir Charles William Pasley.

As Col Pasley, he became the first Service diver when he tested 'Mr Kemp's Diving Equipment' in 1838.

He trained his men to use it, sending them to demolish a wreck obstructing the Thames at Tilbury.

Within a short time divers of the Royal Sappers and Miners managed to lay underwater explosives and clear the remains.

Encouraged by this success, Col Pasley turned his attentions to the wreck of the Royal George at Spithead, bringing some valuable salvage to the surface, and so the tradition of military diving began.

In the 1880s the Royal Engineers built the torpedo test range at Horsea Island on behalf of the Admiralty.

After the World War 2 it became the diving lake, 1,115 yards long, 30ft deep in parts and stocked with submerged vehicles, a helicopter and wreck for the divers to train on.

Horsea Island is also the HQ of the Superintendent of Diving, an RN commander who is responsible for the overall safety and standards of diving in both the Royal Navy and Royal Engineers, and home to the Fleet Diving Squadron, responsible for diving, underwater engineering and bomb disposal in the UK and overseas.

So there is a sense of history coming full circle at Horsea Island, where the two Services have joined forces again at the Defence Diving School.

Command alternates between a Royal Navy commander and a Royal Engineers lieutenant colonel and although it is a joint school, the Army and Navy courses are run separately because the Services require different skills.

The principal task of an Army diver is to provide underwater combat engineering skills for the Field Army, particularly supporting the Royal Engineers in building bridges.

Army divers are trained to operate in lakes and rivers, where the soldiers learn fast-water skills, and they do not use the mixed gas kits which Navy divers use for deep-sea diving. Navy divers train in the Solent, working with tides and sea conditions.

Only one Navy instructor so far has crossed over to teach the Army trainees, and become the first to qualify in fast-water training.

Keith "Milky" Lister, said: "There's always been a bit of a divide between the Army and Navy as far as training goes, so working with the Army has given me the opportunity of finding out what the other side does."

"The Army do more engineering than we do, and it's given me the opportunity to work in fast water. But we use the same equipment – and we understand the same banter."

Troop commander Richard Lawrence said: "I joined the Royal Engineers because I wanted to dive. Why didn't I join the Navy? I didn't want to live in a tin can in the middle of the ocean."

Some divers take Army-Navy integration a step further.

The appropriately-named AB Jack Muddiman, 22, from Cornwall, currently on the AB Diver course, spent six years in the Coldstream Guards before he 'saw the light' as his naval instructors quipped, and crossed Services.

"Working with the Navy hasn't been too much of a shock, as members of my family have been in the Marines for years," he said. "It's a very enjoyable course – tough, but well worth it."

Army divers tend to be older than their Navy counterparts, as there are no direct entrants. They apply after serving for a couple of years in the Royal Engineers.

The Navy takes direct entrants, so trainees as young as 18 (the lower age limit; the upper is 36) can attend the Able Seaman Diver course.

Women are now eligible to train as clearance divers and (as *Navy News* reported in December) Lt Catherine Ker became the first female clearance diver when she qualified last November.

The branch also attracts civilian divers, either amateur or professional. ABs Peter Collins, 20, and Tom Hilder were both divers in the civilian world and decided to make a career of it.

"It's definitely a different form of diving from anything you do in the outside world," said AB Collins.

AB Hilder added: "I always wanted to join the Navy as I had been a sports diver, and this

seemed a natural progression. It's demanding but very rewarding as well."

WO1 Graham Haran, has been an instructor at the school for two-and-a-half years, and runs all the AB and PO courses.

He said: "I was in the Sea Cadets in Bradford and joined the Navy. I liked the idea of diving, and when I tried it, I loved it from the beginning."

He added: "The great things about diving is that you have a lot of responsibility, and every day is different."

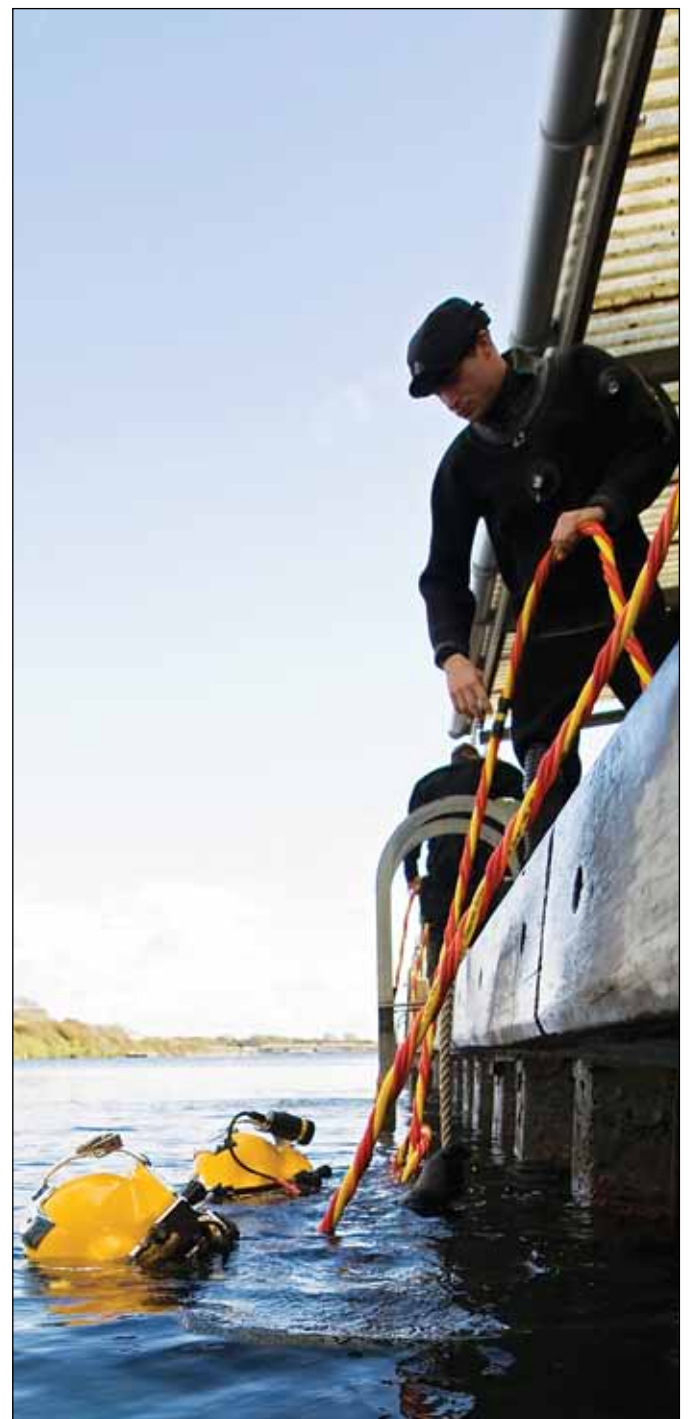
Clearance diving is not a job with wide appeal. You'd have to love it to pass the course – and everyone at the Defence Diving School seems to love it.

Cdr Russell said: "Our training is distilled from hundreds of years of experience in the best practices. What we have is the best product."

"People here love their job and everyone has a smile on their face. There is a feeling of happiness at the school and it's infectious."



Pictures: K Woodland







● Final flight... Four specially-liveried Harrier GR9s in formation for the farewell sortie. Nearest the camera is 800 NAS, then 4 Sqn, 1 Sqn and finally a 1 Sqn jet painted in the original 1969 camouflage pattern.



# Harrier twilight



● Last dawn... The Harriers are lined up on the standings at Cottesmore at first light on December 15

**A**ND so Britain's 50-year love affair with the jump jet is over.

Shortly after 2.30pm on Wednesday December 15 2010 16 Harriers touched down on the tarmac at Cottesmore in Rutland.

They will fly no more. After a decade of development, 41 years of service – more than 30 of those with the Fleet Air Arm – the fabled fighter/bomber is condemned to the history books.

It means that today, for the first time in nearly a century, there are no front-line fixed-wing aircraft in the Royal Navy's inventory.

For a final time 16 Harrier two-seat trainers and GR9s – drawn from 800 Naval Air Squadron and the RAF's 1(F) and 4(F) Squadrons – flew in UK skies as operational aircraft before the axe of austerity, wielded by October's Strategic Defence and Security Review, fell on Joint Force Harrier.

The iconic aircraft, embodying the best of British aero engineering, began life in the early 1960s, entered service at the end of that decade, evolved into the Sea Harrier at the end of the '70s, guaranteed Britain's finest post-war hour in the skies of the Falklands and held the line in the skies of the Gulf and, latterly, Afghanistan.

The jets had already nodded their farewells to HMS Ark Royal and RNAS Yeovilton, home to the Sea Harrier throughout its career in two incarnations, before taking a bow over central and eastern England.

In a final flight of one hour and 45 minutes, the jets flew in formation at heights up to 30,000 ft, passing over ten RAF establishments, before landing back at Cottesmore.

When all 16 jets were safely on the ground and

taxied to their standings, the pilots were 'serenaded' down the tarmac by a pipe band as they walked away from their jets for the last time.

"The last flight was a very poignant moment in what is a very poignant day," said Cdr Dave 'Tinsel' Lindsay, the final Commanding Officer of 800 NAS in its current incarnation.

"It has been an enormous personal privilege and honour to have been involved with this wonderful aircraft for nearly 20 years, at sea and over land, at peace and in conflict."

"I will forever be immensely proud to be able to say I have been a Royal Navy Harrier squadron commander."

His comrade Capt Mike Carty RM added: "Britain can be proud of the legacy that the Harrier leaves behind. We feel very proud to have been part of that legacy."

For the past decade, his squadron has fallen under the umbrella of the combined Fleet Air Arm-RAF Joint Force Harrier. The Air Force, like the Navy, mourns its passing.

"The Harrier is a true icon and stands testament to the innovation and excellence of British design and engineering, and the skill and courage of our airmen," said Air Vice Marshal Greg Bagwell in command of No.1 Group – the RAF's fast jet arm.

"It has had a truly distinguished service with both the RAF and the Royal Navy, from the South Atlantic to the skies over Afghanistan. It now takes its place in history as one of aviation's greats."

For now, all 79 remaining Harriers in Britain's inventory go into storage as Whitehall seeks potential buyers.

As for the men who have crewed and maintained them, all the Harrier squadrons were disbanding at a formal ceremony at RAF Wittering – the Air Force's home to the jump jet since it entered service in 1969 – as Navy News went to press.



● All 16 Harriers in formation over the skies of eastern England for the final fly past and (above) the last Commanding Officer of 800 NAS, Cdr Dave Lindsay, carries out checks before take-off in his final time in a jump jet cockpit



pictures: la(phot) luis holden, 800 nas, cpl al crowe, sac mark dixon, jamie hunter



# US 'ghost fleet' was no phantom flotilla

In reply to your correspondent Robin Allum (*letters*, January) he can rest easy. I also saw the Ghost Fleet from HMS Ocean.

Apparently the US Fleet had been ordered to clear the Eastern Mediterranean so as not to become involved.

One of my friends who was on the flag deck said that they did not acknowledge any signals.

– Malcolm Clarke, Westbury on Trym, Bristol

...DURING the Suez campaign I was serving on HMS Salerno, an LST 3513, as a Petty Officer Cook.

The galley was on the deck on the stern. We had good views aft and each side of the ship, observing the Anglo-French convoy all around.

The operation's task was to regain the Suez Canal.

I saw US ships on the horizon and when I went to my action station on the bow doors when the ship beached to help 15 Centurion tanks disembark, the US ships came in close to all LSTs at speed, with what we thought was a view to swamp us – zigzagging around each ship.

The landing was successful and our British and French forces advanced some halfway down the canal when they halted and HMS Salerno went up the canal and embarked helicopters in the tank deck and returned to England.

I gather the US through NATO etc made us withdraw.

– Fred Motley, retired cookery officer and rating pilot, Southsea, Hants

...I AGREE with Shipmate Allum that there were American ships present before we attacked Egypt, Operation Musketeer, on November 6 1956.

All RN ships went to action stations when an unidentified

submarine was forced to surface when it was detected beneath English and French shipping not long before our attack.

It proved to be American and it surfaced so fast, for fear of being depth-charged, that it nearly took off and became a flying fish!

I was on board HMLST Striker at the time, with 40 Commando Royal Marines.

– Tony Davie, RNA Woking, RMA Reading

...YES – there was an American Fleet crossing and recrossing us on our way to Suez.

I was serving on my first ship, HMS Undine. We had just left our Cyprus patrols and returned to Malta to re-group and return to the UK. We arrived late evening and moored up to a buoy behind a destroyer.

At around 2am all our alarm bells sounded action stations and we left Grand Harbour at full revs, 30 minutes or so later the skipper came on the intercom system and told us that the Suez Canal had been closed.

The destroyer moored ahead of us was Egyptian and our job was to detain or destroy her, we chased but lost her among the Greek Islands. She was later captured by the Israelis.

As we were an anti-submarine frigate we were then told to screen the fleet against possible Russian submarine presence.

Whilst on lookout I reported 'objects' at port 15 degrees moving left to right, this eventually turned out to be a US carrier fleet, unlit, that crossed our bows without lights, signals, or radio contact.

It was to us a ghost fleet, so no, Robin, you were not the only one to view it.

– Christopher Roddis, written from P&O Artemis (on another cruise....)

## No recognition for deeps

IN THE December issue an ex-submariner complained how disappointed he was that he could not get some recognition for serving in boats during the Cold War.

He should not be surprised that he gets no recognition.

As a submariner in the 1940s and 1950s we carried out many wartime patrols in which we went into the enemy's 'backyard' on every patrol.

We carried out sinking by torpedo, or gunfire, we also laid mines and conducted landings

on shore with the MO (Military Operations) and MI (Military Intelligence).

When we eventually came back to the UK we were directed to some remote loch in Scotland where we got sent on leave for a week.

At the end of all this we were never recognised in any way, in fact I would say as a submariner, we weren't much thought of during the war or afterwards, so I think that worrying about a pin is a bit futile.

– Des Radwell, Falmouth

## Squadron survivors

WHILST I was saddened to read of the death of S/Lt Peter Adam of 857 Squadron, (*People*, page 31, December) I wondered where or who the paragraph "the last remaining member of the original 857 Naval Air Squadron has died", came from?

My old shipmate Jack Riches and myself are ex-members of the original 857 Squadron. We served with Peter on board HMS Indomitable through the entire Pacific campaign.

Peter was an excellent pilot and a gentleman – but last survivor of 857 Squadron, he is not.

I wonder if there are any more ex-857 originals out there?

– John Rigby, Basingstoke, Hants

# Steam locomotives in the Arctic

I WAS interested to read about Lt Brian Drewett and his service on the USS Winston Churchill (November, page 19) and his next appointment.

For most of my life my hobbies have included an interest in railways and trams.

I have been an Information Point Volunteer at the National Railway Museum in York for 16 years and I would like to invite Lt Drewett to look around the NRM, home to another Winston Churchill, if he would like to see her namesake locomotive.

I have been trying to discover connections between railways, trams and the Royal Navy or other navies.

A feature in the Friends' National Railway Museum Review in 2010 revealed that the Royal Navy purchased two locomotives in 1845, one from the London and Greenwich Railway and one from the London and Birmingham Railway.

Their wheels were removed and they were fitted to the bomb ships HMS Erebus and Terror, where they were to act as auxiliary engines powering a new type of marine screw.

These ships were taken on the 1845 Arctic Expedition commanded by Sir John Franklin, the purpose of which was to navigate and chart the Northwest Passage.



● The steam locomotive Winston Churchill pulling Churchill's funeral train. Photograph by kind permission of the National Railway Museum, York.

Both now lie within or beneath the ice of the Arctic Ocean.

Until I read the piece, I had never heard of a steam locomotive actually becoming part of the guts of a ship.

– David Tolson, Rillington, Malton, North Yorkshire

The steam locomotive Winston Churchill, now in the National Railway Museum in York, pulled the wartime leader's funeral train from Waterloo to Hanborough, near his ancestral home of Blenheim Palace, on January 30 1965 – Ed



A £25 Amazon voucher to David Tolson for the letter which moved, entertained and enlightened us the most

## Leaving is just routine

READING the letters about what should or shouldn't occur at the time of discharge from the RN, there appears to be a marked difference in the expectations of those who have served their full time (22 years or more) and other lesser beings like myself, who opted for an earlier discharge.

In my case, I was a Petty Officer with 16 years' service and was lucky enough to have already signed a contract with my civilian employer, starting with them just a couple of weeks after discharge.

I couldn't wait to leave, and I turned up at Nelson Barracks ready to complete my discharge routine in record time.

Any handshaking, farewell chats, special recognition, back-slapping, sincere thanks, bugles and drums with colours unfurled, or even a fly-past would have gone unappreciated and been something of a hindrance.

I had a fantastic time in the RN and no regrets, but

## HMS Illustrious VC?

WITH the government's announcement of its decision to scrap the Royal Navy's last operational carrier, HMS Illustrious, albeit after a long and distinguished career (indeed, by 2014, the longest of any modern British capital ship), would it now be at least possible to take the opportunity of her final commission to correct a long-standing disservice to the Fleet Air Arm and properly honour the memory of those true heroes who flew from her namesake predecessor 70 years ago?

On November 11 1940, in the singlemost strategically-effective combat operation ever undertaken by any branch of the British Armed Forces in either world war, the Swordfish torpedo bombers of 812 and 815 Squadrons, Fleet Air Arm, flying from the previous HMS Illustrious, effectively crippled the entire Italian Fleet for the major part of the most crucial period of the Mediterranean campaign.

Had it not been for Operation Judgement, the air raid on Taranto, the course of the war may have been

a new, exciting chapter in life awaited me.

My advice to those who are approaching their discharge, regardless of rank or rate of the amount of time served, is that they banish sentimentality and any expectations of gestures of gratitude.

Just turn up, get your discharge routine done, and get away as fast as possible. The RN no longer needs you and you no longer need the RN. Don't look back over your shoulder, keep focused on what's ahead. It's just like the end of any relationship, get over it, move on.

Furthermore, chucking your kit into a bin and stamping on it achieves nothing. Why be so mean-spirited?

Instead, donate it to your local Sea Cadet unit, it's always gratefully received and given a very worthy home.

– Mark Jenkinson, (RN 1972-88) Stockholm, Sweden

very different, and far bloodier, for the Allies.

In comparison with operations undertaken by the RAF, such as the attack on the Ruhr dams, the Fleet Air Arm crews received scant reward in terms of decorations, and even before the meagre sprinkling of medals was amended, many of those who raided Taranto had died in the bombardment of the Illustrious by Stuka dive-bombers in early 1941.

As communities such as Dunkirk and Malta have been awarded medals such as the DSO and George Cross by the British government for their fortitude in wartime, could not the Illustrious receive the accolade her namesake's crew so richly deserved in 1940, and serve out her final years as HMS Illustrious VC?

Not only would this honour those naval airmen who truly earned the much-abused title of 'hero' 70 years ago, but it would display an ongoing moral commitment to maintain naval aviation as an essential component of the Navy on which this nation depends for its defence.

– Hadrian Jeffs, Norwich, Norfolk

## Farewell to all pets

THE January 2011 *Navy News* featured an article in 'The Time of your Lives' section about a black mongrel bitch in the minesweeper HMS Wolverton.

I was the last Navigator of HMS Wolverton when she served as a patrol boat in the Hong Kong Squadron, and the presence of the dog onboard in 1971 clearly started a trend in the ship.

When she had completed her service in Hong Kong in 1985, she was replaced by HMS Swift and sold off to become a nightclub.

As part of the disposal preparations, we had to decide how to deal with the ship's wide selection of animals, which included: two mongrel dogs (Scab and Sam), two terrapins (Jake and Elwood), two ducks, a cat, and a lovebird – all of whom lived on board.

As the British members of the crew were all returning to the UK, we had to leave the animals behind with the locally-employed Chinese members of the crew.

We did not ask too closely what actually happened to them all, but when I returned two years later, they were nowhere to be seen!

– Capt Richard Powell, CO HMS Dauntless

## Homage in Souda Bay

I READ with great interest the letter from Bernard Hallas (January) about the pilgrimage to Crete and Service of Remembrance at Souda Bay planned for May 2011.

I laid a wreath in May 2005 at the Commonwealth War Graves' Commission at Souda Bay, as other members of the HMS Orion Association have done during many other years.

Also as a former Secretary of the RMA Leicester Branch, because my late husband was an RM Commando evacuated on HMS Orion, I have a strong interest in this ceremony and have contact with the British Consulate in Crete, who also attend the Souda Bay ceremony.

I will contact them and enclose a copy of Mr Hallas' letter to ask if something can be done from their office to (quoting Mr Hallas) "see that at least one White Ensign flies over the waters of Souda Bay."

– Kay West, Secretary, HMS Orion Association, Great Glen, Leicester

## True Brit

I AM British, I have served in Her Majesty's Forces, and I am proud of these circumstances.

HMS Daring is a British ship that is 'flying the flag' for our country.

Why does such a prestigious event as a visit to New York include the dispersal of England football strips to schoolchildren?

This accentuates the impression of many American citizens that I am English. I am not English – I am British.

– Lt Cdr Louise Minter, (Ret'd) Glasgow

## opinion

ONE of the great pleasures of working at *Navy News* is reading the letters that readers send to us.

What a treasure-trove of history they are, these first-hand accounts of experiences of naval life in peace and war, some funny, some very moving, all vivid.

As the years go by, there are inevitably fewer first-hand accounts of World War 2 (though still a goodly number, as this letters page shows) and the perspective shifts to the 1950s and beyond.

But what will happen in another 50 years? Letter-writing is increasingly the preserve of the older generations.

Younger people communicate through a plethora of media, in fact there has probably never been so much communication as there is now.

But emails, texts, Facebook, Twitter, Blogspot and Wordpress – all are ephemeral. As a spokeswoman from the Imperial War Museum

said: "Letters aren't just put in an attic like they used to be."

The museum has realised there is a huge hole in contemporary material because so much of it nowadays is digital, so it is urging servicemen and women to join its War Story project, and log their experiences of Afghanistan, in whatever form.

Anyone signing up to the project can use film, art, photography or the written word to capture their memories and experiences and build a historical record of the conflict as a legacy for future generations.

However vivid experiences are at the time, old men forget, as Shakespeare said.

So let's hope many Servicemen and women take this opportunity, because it would be a sad loss to future generations if most of these first-hand experiences went adrift because of the transient nature of modern communications.

The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the MOD



classic

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● HMSDML 3516 at Sheerness



## Gunnery practice on the Gorgon

READING about HMS Medusa's refit and re-emergence (December, page 38) brought back vivid memories.

I served on her in 1958-60 when she was HMSDML 3516, attached to the East Coast of England Survey Unit which was based at Sheerness, though she only spent the winters there, most of the time we were in Harwich, Ramsgate, Lowestoft etc.

It was a very interesting time for me, as I joined her as an Able Seaman Gunner, replacing an AB Survey Recorder (SR).

The skipper, a lieutenant whose name I have forgotten, said as soon as I stepped aboard with a full kitbag: "I did not ask for a

gunner, I wanted a SR!"

Just then the Coxswain appeared and said: "I will look after him, sir" and the skipper's passing shot was "The only gun we have is a Very pistol so you are in charge of that."

My 18 months on her, though, turned out to be much more involved with the survey side, as when I left I was recommended to change to the SR branch, though once back in the clutches of the 'other navy' I was soon off to Whale Island for a gunnery course and the rest is history, as I ended up as a Chief Gunnery Instructor.

So much for career development!

— Ken Satterthwaite, King's Langley, Herts

## Keys to Locksmith

YOUR article *Murdered Sailors Honoured in Berlin* (January, page 31) states that there are 17 servicemen honoured on the Sachsenhausen Memorial.

This is not correct, there are 20.

I did some research on Operation Checkmate and found a photo of the memorial with 20 names, 14 from Operations Checkmate and Musketoan, with seven men in each op.

As a former RN/RAN submariner, RN and Special Forces research is right up my alley and I had heard of Musketoan as it started from the F/French submarine Junon.

On Checkmate there were six RN personnel, S/Lt John Goodwin RNVR, POs Harold Hiscock and Alfred Roe, with OS Neville Burgess, Keith Mayor and Andrew West (they were all attached to No 14 (Arctic Commando) and Sgt Jack Cox (on loan from No 12 Commando).

Major Francis Suttill and Capt W Grover-Williams were both SOE agents captured in France.

There is a mention of Lt Cdr Claud Cumberledge in the article, and it says he remained behind in Greece in 1941 to conduct sabotage operations.

He sounds very much like Lt Cdr Mike Cumberledge, who is mentioned in Antony Beevor's book *Crete, the Battle and Resistance* where he was the skipper of a Greek caique that transported SOE agents to and from Crete as part of the Levant Schooner Flotilla, based in Palestine.

It also says: "...in late 1942, early 1943, Mike Cumberledge was captured in an attempt to sabotage the Corinth Canal and shot at Flossenburg Concentration camp in the last days of the war, two days before they surrendered."

Lt Cdr Cumberledge and his team of three men were all captured and taken initially to Vienna, before arriving at Sachsenhausen.

I have positively linked Sgt Thomas Handley and Czech Corporal Jan Kotbra (who used his wife's maiden name) to this operation and I believe that the fourth man could have been CSM James Steele (these four men make up the 20 names on the memorial).

If anyone can uncover any more information on Operation Locksmith, which was probably an SOE Op, I would be most interested.

— John Keating, Rockingham, Western Australia

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E-mail correspondence is also requested to provide information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it.

Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all our correspondence in Navy News.

However, we publish many online, at [www.navynews.co.uk](http://www.navynews.co.uk), and by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.




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# A FORCE FOR GOOD



## White knight helps ward

IS ARK Royal's LAET Nigel White dazzled by the flash of the camera bulb... or possibly the 'colourful' shirt his CO, Capt John Clink, is wearing?

Even more dazzling than both, however, is the fact that the leading hand decided to donate some of his lottery winnings (*being handed over in LA(Phot) Gregg Macready's photograph*) to charity.

When Nigel won the ship's raffle (£4k) he immediately offered to give one quarter of the sum to the Children's Surgery Ward at Southampton General Hospital.

The reason why? Well, some 30 years ago baby Nigel received two life-saving operations at the hospital.

Following twice-yearly check-ups he was given the all-clear at the age of 13 and, aged 20, he fulfilled his ambition of following in his dad's footsteps and serving under the White Ensign.

Every year the air engineer donates toys and teddies to the ward, but has always wanted to make a more significant donation; his ticket being drawn out of the carrier's raffle during the Auriga deployment afforded him just such an opportunity.

"I owe so much to the hospital – and especially the children's ward," said Nigel. "I've never forgotten what they did for me and have always done what I can buying toys and the like – and I'll continue to do that – but it's just great to be able to do something like this."



● HMS Edinburgh's Santas all dressed up for the eponymous festive fun run in Southsea

# All for a good Claus

YES, we know it's February.

But there's been so much Santa-related fundraising tomfoolery since our last issue we couldn't ignore it.

And besides, where else could you find a photograph of Santa in the back of a Royal Navy helicopter (*try page 28 – ed*).

We'll begin with the chaps and chapesses above from the good ship HMS Edinburgh, posing in front of Southsea's Pyramids Centre for the Santa Fun Run.

Ten ship's company from the destroyer volunteered for the charity race, led by their CO Cdr Paul Russell, and all donned appropriate festive fancy dress for the workout (no we have no idea why some are in blue rather than the more usual St Nick red...).

They joined around 1,000 other fun runners on the streets of Portsmouth and Southsea for the Believe and Achieve/Alexandra Sports event which didn't mind if competitors completed five or (the hardcore) ten kilometres walking or running – as long as they raised money for the local RNLI.

The ten matelots clocked up 85 kilometres (52 miles) between them and raised £134 for the lifeboat charity.

"It was such an enjoyable event for a really good cause that I'm thinking of doing my next half-ironman [cycle-swim-run] in a Santa suit," said Cdr Russell.

Aside from preparing for that, there's the small matter of getting the Fortress of the Sea through a spot of Operational Sea Training in Plymouth before Edinburgh deploys in the spring following her refit in Portsmouth.

To Culdrose now and the good folk of 820 Naval Air Squadron who delivered a special visitor to the children of Sennen Ward, Royal Cornwall Hospital Treliske (clue, he wears red and has a white beard).

While deployed in the Middle East and elsewhere, members of the Merlin squadron raised funds for the children's Christmas party at Paradise Park in Hayle.

AET Lucy Holt (also coincidentally a part-time elf) organised a number of events including a Halloween Fancy Dress Night and a beard-growing competition during the deployment.

In total, the men and women of 820 NAS raised £750 for the ward to help cover costs for presents and the party.

Lt Cdr Steve Thomas said: "820's long-standing affiliation with the ward is something we are very proud of, and the chance for us to bring some Christmas cheer to children unfortunate enough to be ill at this time of year was most welcome."

"To deliver Santa himself was a privilege that we simply couldn't pass up."

"Several members of the squadron have had children treated on the ward, so it is very close to both the squadron and



● It would be much more fun if I had a machine-gun like the chap on page 28... a pensive Santa on his way to visit ill youngsters at the Royal Cornwall Hospital – courtesy of 820 NAS

RNAS Culdrose's hearts."

Santa brought with him a sack stuffed full of teddy bears, courtesy of Bears on Location, for the children on Sennen and other wards around the hospital.

Not to be outdone in the Santa stakes were the **Commando Helicopter Force** who delivered Santa to two local schools (his sleigh obviously was proving more troublesome mechanically than a Sea King...).

A Jungly Mk 4 dropped in on schools in Chilton Cantelo, near Marston Magna, and Leweston, near Sherborne.

At Leweston the children gave shoe boxes to Santa which they had filled with gifts as an appeal to support children after the disaster in Haiti.

Santa's plans to visit Charlton Farm Children's Hospice South West at Wrexall were scuppered by weather, so the team from 848 Naval Air Squadron whisked Santa there by car.

Whilst at the hospice, the squadron presented a donation for over £1,000 raised through charitable events and coordinated by the Engineering Training Office.

Needy folk in Fareham and Gosport had a bumper Christmas thanks to personnel and VT Flagship staff at from HMS Collingwood.

People at the Fareham establishment spent the year filling hampers with anything from biscuits and exotic tea to children's toys, books, and health and beauty products.

Come December the thoroughly-stuffed hampers were

ready for handing over to Fareham and Gosport Adult Services Department.

And finally... A song, recorded at Camp Bastion last year, by two members of the Royal Navy has been raising money for Help for Heroes.

The song, *Maybe This Christmas!*, was written by S/Lt Dave Emery, who is the guitarist, and lead vocalist is Lt Phil Clark, both of whom met while on active duty with 857 Naval Air Squadron in Afghanistan.

Once back in the UK, the two joined forces with three of Dave's friends to create the band Little Red Ambulance.

Dave said: "We wanted to bring Christmas back! I wrote a song to conjure and inspire a warmth and Christmas spirit unravelled by recent Christmas releases."

"We identified that recent popular hits have either contained a token seasonal sound or been totally lacking in any relevance to Christmas at all!"

"Looking at those tunes that are played year in year out as Christmas classics, they all have festive content in abundance."

Phil explained: "While the prospect of battling it out with established artists in the Christmas chart is hugely exciting for us all, we hope to maximise the money we can raise for Help for Heroes."

"It is such a valid and relevant cause especially for two of us who have witnessed firsthand the courage and commitment of the Servicemen and women on the front line. They deserve all the support they can get!"

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# Severe run for Severn man

**MOST people drafted to HMS Severn think one thing: fish.**

But not CPO Ian 'Mac' McDougall. Assigned to the fishery protection ship as her assistant marine engineer officer, the senior rate was possessed by a single thought: to run the length of the namesake river.

In one go.  
That's 220 miles.

Ian, a keen runner, has already completed several endurance events: 'ultra' marathons and the Grand Union Canal Race... covering the entire 145-mile-length of the manmade waterway from Birmingham to London.

But that's still 75 miles fewer than the length of the Severn.

Oddly, there's no Severn Race... so the senior rate devised his own – following the Severn Way from the official mouth of the river (Severn Beach, just south of the new Severn crossing) to the source at Plynlimon, a dozen miles east of Aberystwyth, vowing to cover the distance in three days.

So on a cold winter's morning with a lightweight tent on his back, two fully-charged iPod shuffles to provide the entertainment, he set out.

After a day and a half pounding the trail, Ian reckoned he deserved a break, pitched tent and got his head down.

Once refreshed he was on his feet again for another lengthy stint. He stopped just once more – not through exhaustion but because



he wanted to complete the final ten miles of the odyssey in daylight (not least because the terrain in the Cambrian mountains was challenging).

And so he reached the source of the Severn in daylight (taking a self-portrait as proof) before a small six-mile run to meet his ride back to civilisation.

All this was done while the engineer was on watch leave; his ship was ploughing through UK waters, receiving regular updates on the chief's progress, and throwing money into the charity pot.

As Ian racked up the miles, so Severn and the rest of the Cod

Squad dipped into their pockets, raising £600.

That's been raised to £1,000 courtesy of profits from the newsgents Ian and his partner Jo run in Gosport, Queen's Parade News.

The fund-raising didn't stop there aboard Severn, however, which has staged pizza nights, fish racing nights (substituting fish for the more typical horses), beard-growing and collections, bringing the total collected by the River-class ship to £1,500.

The proceeds will be divided among Kids in Fareham, RNRMC, the Multiple Sclerosis Trust and Forrester Holm Cancer Hospice.



## Surf's up for charity windsurfers

THE Navy, Army and RAF windsurfing teams set themselves the challenge to windsurf around the Isle of Wight.

Twenty people took up the trial, in a combination of relay teams and solo attempts.

In total, the challenge raised £20,000 for Help for Heroes, and £5,000 for each of the Service charities.

The day started out with a demanding Force 4 wind from the west, which meant that as a windsurfer cannot sail directly into the wind the straight-line distance of ten nautical miles would be at least half as much again.

This lost some of the challengers before the Needles, but those who got ahead of the tide and made it round had the benefit of the wind helping them along the south of the island.

Once this leg of 20 nautical miles was completed, the windsurfers passed St Catherine's Point; the windsurfing became trickier in light winds towards the East

Solent, with the wind dropping as the sun began to set.

The first entry to complete the challenge (without stopping or changing equipment) was the Royal Navy pair, Cdr Gerry Northwood and AB(Diver) Steve Roberts. The duo managed to complete their island lap in ten hours.

Two Army teams also completed the challenge, and an RAF team in a relay. The other members of the Navy team relayed to the halfway point, at which stage the wind died, bringing their attempt to a halt due to safety reasons.

The full Navy team were: Cdr Gerry Northwood, Lt Simon Cave, Lt Phil Bent, WO1 Dave Strudwick, PO Gav Nicolson, and AB(D) Steve Roberts.

Lt Phil Bent said: "The Forces Windsurfing Challenge certainly lived up to its name; 110 miles over 10 gruelling hours, it was the most demanding physical and mental challenge most windsurfers will ever have to complete."



## Boosting the Bike Ride

TEAM FFB – the Fit, the Fat, and the Beautiful – are getting into training for this year's Big Battlefield Bike Ride 2011 in aid of Help for Heroes.

Royal Fleet Auxiliary Medical Technician Don Bradshaw (pictured above with his 'favourite exercise bike' on RFA Diligence east of Suez) has neglected to tell us whether he is fit, fat or beautiful, but did say that he was hoping to return to the UK in April "a lot lighter than I am now".

Don, who served in the Royal Navy for 23 years before signing up with the RFA, will be joined by his wife Pippa, who is still serving with the RN and about to join HMS Illustrious, and her brother Chris. (We're hoping for the sake of marital harmony that Pippa is the Beautiful in the team...)

If you would like to support Don in his fundraising and weightloss efforts, he can be reached at RFA Diligence, BFPO 438, or email [438-medtech@a.dii.mod.uk](mailto:438-medtech@a.dii.mod.uk).

## Talent gives to Hope

THE MEN of Plymouth-based submarine HMS Talent headed north to their affiliated town of Shrewsbury to present funds to the Hope House Hospice.

The hospice is the submarine's official charity, and sailors raised £1,726 through horse-racing nights and raffles during their recent deployment.

Lt Greg Stopps said: "It was very thought-provoking and somewhat humbling to see the hard work that these care workers do in supporting the sick children in their time of need."

"The facilities are first rate and I am very pleased we could do our little bit in helping them raise some of the £5 million that it costs to fund the hospice for a year."

## Motorcycle point to point

THE final presentation took place last month of the efforts of the RN and RAF Servicemen from RAF Cottesmore to completed the Point to Point round-Britain motorcycle ride.

The team completed a 3,500 mile ride over 14 days, with the support of some impressive sponsors including: Triumph UK, Nissan GB, and Direct CCTV.

In total, £15,458 was raised for Help for Heroes.

If you wish to support this event, you can online at [www.helpforheroes-pointtopoint.webs.com](http://www.helpforheroes-pointtopoint.webs.com).

## Marathon Star needed

The Royal Star & Garter Homes for disabled ex-Service men and women are looking for a *Navy News* reader to run in this year's London Marathon.

If you would be interested, contact Susan Harley on 020 8439 8118 or [sue.harley@starandgarter.org](mailto:sue.harley@starandgarter.org).

## Marathon Mark runs for RNRMC

THIS year WO Mark Duffy of HMS Collingwood is tackling a mammoth challenge of nine half marathons and three full 26-mile slogs to raise money for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC).

The senior rate (pictured right), who is based at the Royal Navy Leadership Academy, is a keen runner.

He said: "The challenge, I feel, will be hard work over the period of 12 months, taking into account that with each event comes all the training required."

"But if every single member of the RN and RM donated £1 we would raise over £34,000 for the charity. But if I raise just £1 it would still be worthwhile for the sake of the RNRMC."

The races will summon the submariner around the country, visiting Chester, Oxford, Silverstone, Newcastle and various other places.

If you would like to show your support, please visit his website at [www.virginmoneygiving.com/marc.duffy2](http://www.virginmoneygiving.com/marc.duffy2).

■ THE RNRMC is the largest grant maker to the Naval Service. At the end of last year, two of its subsidiary charities agreed grants.

The Naval Service Amenity Fund provides grants for a range of activities focused entirely on the Service and on their families.

At its last meeting, the committee agreed the following grants:

■ Half yearly grants to ships, RM units and other operational units' welfare funds – £126,000

■ Allocation to the minor grant fund – £70,000

■ Grants to support major projects – £166,200 including:

■ 45 Commando – refurbishment of the WO and Sergeant's mess – £9,500

■ Naval Outdoor Centre Germany – ongoing grant to support NOCG's activities – £20,000

■ Gibraltar – replacement fishing boat – £23,000

■ Rothiemurchus Lodge,



Cairngorms – upgrade heating and hot water systems – £27,000

■ RNSA – support entry to the 2011 Rolex Fastnet race – £10,000

■ International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes – enabling serving personnel to attend the 2011 pilgrimage – £11,000

■ HCPT Pilgrimage to Lourdes – to support children with learning difficulties to experience the pilgrimage – £20,000

■ HMS Nelson – Wifi enabling the Wardroom – £13,700

■ HMS Daring – upgrading the Wardroom and WO and SR Mess – £32,000

The committee of the Naval Service Benevolent Fund agreed grants to:

■ Royal Naval Benevolent Trust – £100,000, including £30,000 towards replacing the boilers at the Pembroke House Care Home;

■ Royal Navy and Royal Marine's Children's Fund – £100,000

■ WRNS Benevolent Trust – £8,000

■ Alabare Christian Care – £4,000

■ Mutual Support – the Armed Forces Multiple Sclerosis Group – £5,000.



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Legion beneficiary **Gusset Mark Stonelake** was serving in Afghanistan when he lost a leg in an explosion.



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● Lt Cdr Roger Stringer

## Hectic return to Gannet

THE former boss of HMS Gannet returned to Prestwick just in time for one of the busiest weekends of the year.

Lt Cdr Roger Stringer is back at the UK's busiest search and rescue unit for his final job before retiring from the Navy – the fourth time in his career as a pilot that the officer has been based at Gannet.

But there was to be no gentle easing in, as the jobs just kept on coming on Friday and Saturday morning, his first duty back.

He and the duty crew carried out four call-outs, as well as a routine training sortie, in his first 24 hours back at the controls.

Roger said: "Coming to work at eight in the morning I thought that I might be fortunate enough to be afforded a more gentle transition into my new post rather than being in the cockpit for 12 hours, two thirds of which were at night and finishing at 2.30 the following morning!"

He added: "Despite having spent several years previously based at Prestwick I was still struck by the privilege that we enjoy in HMS Gannet, flying over one of the most beautiful and awe-inspiring parts of the country."

Current CO Lt Cdr Bhattacharya said: "I am thrilled that Roger has returned home to HMS Gannet."

"To have someone with his huge aviation experience and in-depth knowledge of the aircraft or crew room alongside our more junior aircrew creates fantastic learning opportunities for all involved."

"I am looking forward to many more flights with him but it would be nice if they weren't quite as hectically busy as it was today!"

## Prize for musician

A YOUNG sailor from Sheffield who studied music at university has used his talents for the benefit of fellow trainees – and won an award into the bargain.

Wtr Jonathan Wragg, who joined up in May last year, has dedicated his free time to providing the musical accompaniment to the weekly church services at HMS Raleigh, and assembled a small, enthusiastic choral group for the establishment's carol service.

In recognition of his services Jonathan was presented with the Captain's Prize by Capt Steve Murdoch, the Commanding Officer of HMS Raleigh.

Jonathan, who aims to join the officer corps, took up music at the age of eight and is a grade 8 organist. He also sings and plays the piano.

"Receiving this award was a total surprise and I'm still a bit shocked," said the 23-year-old.

"I was looking for something fun to do which was outside of my training and this seemed perfect."

Chaplain Rev David Wylie said: "For us he has been a Godsend in helping us provide high-quality worship at a time when it has been difficult to recruit a dedicated organist."

"His commitment, humble and professional attitude and wholehearted support to the breadth and depth of Naval life make him a worthy example amongst his peers and beyond."

Picture: Sgt Rupert Frere RLC



# Even Santa has to take precautions...

EVEN Santa Claus has to take reasonable precautions when delivering goodies around the hotspots of Helmand Province in Afghanistan.

Door gunner PO Richard Symonds, dressed for the occasion, is pictured in a Sea King distributing mail and presents to troops on the ground.

Servicemen and women in Afghanistan made the most of the festivities of Christmas Day, with a traditional dinner and plenty of seasonal pursuits.

The MOD sent over six tonnes of festive food to give British forces a taste of traditional Christmas

while on operations, including:

- Two tonnes of turkey;
- 1.5 tonnes of gammon;
- 1.5 tonnes of sprouts;
- 200kg of cranberry sauce;
- 1,000 iced Christmas cakes;
- One tonne of Christmas puddings;
- 15,000 mince pies;
- 45,000 After Eight mints.

Charity UK4U Thanks! became Santa's little helper as they provided 22,500 Christmas boxes to troops all over the world, containing a host of goodies bought with money donated from members of the public.

The presents were unwrapped by troops serving in Afghanistan

on Christmas Day.

While work continued for many of the troops, most had the chance to let their hair down a little with fun and games, sports competitions, and quizzes.

Church services were also held by the team of padres to ensure the true spirit of Christmas was not forgotten.

And everyone received an extra 30 minutes free time on their welfare phone card to ensure they could wish their family and friends a merry Christmas.

Members of the Parachute Regiment Band travelled around Helmand all Christmas Day to play at Christmas services and music for carol singing.



● Santa Jim Stevenson's ankle is plastered by LMA Michelle Trotter (right) and LS Chantal Smith

## Joint operation

NOT a chimney in sight, but Santa still came a cropper when he visited HMS Scott.

Santa – who bears an uncanny resemblance to PO Jim Stevenson – missed his footing on the upper deck and broke his ankle.

Luckily help was on hand in the form of two members of the National Elf Service (who also looked remarkably like Jim's colleagues LMA Michelle Trotter and LS Chantal Smith...) who whisked Santa down to the ship's sick bay and put his foot in plaster.

After which festive frivolity resumed, including mince pies and carols, in near-tropical conditions.

Scott spent Christmas at Cape Town in South Africa as she prepared for her first stint in the Antarctic ice this austral summer.

The survey ship is filling in for HMS Endurance; her fate remains undecided in Portsmouth, two years after nearly foundering.

During her last deployment south, in the 2009-10 austral summer, Scott surveyed some 3,000 miles of ocean.



## Pilot Stan calls it a day

ONE of the Royal Navy's most experienced pilots has retired after 35 years service.

Lt Cdr Stan Burgess (above) joined the Navy in February 1976, to become a helicopter pilot.

On completion of flying training he was sent to Prestwick to become a Search and Rescue (SAR) pilot, so it is fitting that he leaves the Service having spent the last five years on 771 Naval Air Squadron in Cornwall, instructing the new generation of Naval SAR pilots.

Stan has flown over 100 rescue missions in Scotland and the South West, helping to save many lives.

While at Prestwick Stan also flew maritime counter terrorism missions, and was one of the pilots who recovered Lord Mountbatten and his family from Sligo to Dublin after the IRA bombing in 1979.

His prime operational flying was in the anti-submarine role, spending months in the North Atlantic and Arctic, flying from various ships including HMS Bulwark, Hermes and RFA Olmeda.

He has also flown in the Caribbean and Mediterranean, and spent two years on exchange with the Royal Australian Navy – and as part of RAN centenary celebrations, Stan was required to fly the RAN ensign, which was the size of a tennis court, at 200ft through the major cities and at all the major sporting venues including the Australian Grand Prix and Melbourne Cup.

For years Stan was involved in helicopter display flying for the Navy, and for two seasons led the Whales formation display team which used Sea King helicopters, displaying at many air shows around the UK and in Europe.

He was recognised as providing the best display at the 1994 Nantes Air Show in France and also organised and led the NATO helicopter flypast for the 50th Anniversary of D-Day.

Stan has flown over 7,000 hours in Gazelle, Squirrel, Wessex and Sea King helicopters, and was the personal pilot to the Prince of Wales between 1995 and 1998.

Between 1999 and 2001 Stan was CO of 705 Squadron, part of the Defence Helicopter Flying School.

Stan was a Naval Diving Officer for 17 years and a Mountain Expedition Leader.

He won several RN downhill medals, and although retiring from flying Stan will continue to instruct on the water, as he is a yacht and motor boat cruising instructor.

## OBE for loyal Reservist

THE former Commanding Officer of reservist unit HMS Sherwood has been presented with his OBE by the Prince of Wales in London.

Capt Ian Robinson RNR was named in the Queen's Birthday Honours List last summer – and managed to make it to the ceremony at Buckingham Palace in mid-December despite the worst the weather could throw at him.

Capt Robinson has always been at the forefront of developments in the RNR to keep it relevant and usable by the future regular RN service.

He is currently undertaking duties in the MOD as part of the Future Reserves 2020 study team.



● Yes, we know it is now February and Christmas is old hat, but with the Type 22s taking their bow in the coming weeks we thought it only fair to record the odd milestone along the way – so here is the last group of sailors on Christmas duties on board HMS Campbelltown, complete with suitable headgear. AB(SC) Mel Haslam (kneeling, snowman hat) said they spent four hours on Christmas Eve making the hats while indulging in that festive favourite, a "good old game of Monopoly". Alongside Mel in PO(AWT) Lewis's picture, taken on Christmas Day, are (from left) ET(WE) Sam Holdroyd, AB(CIS) Andy Dawson, CH Phillip Mitchell, AB(CIS) Ryan Hopson and MA Donna Gale





● John and Jack Hendren

## Move on, it's Jack's Navy now

ONE out, one in – the torch has passed on from one generation to the next in a Naval family.

WO John Hendren, aged 51, has recently retired from the Senior Service after 34 years – just as his 19-year-old son Jack passed out of training at HMS Raleigh.

“The funny thing is,” said John, “that the final time I wore my uniform was a few weeks ago at Jack's passing-out parade.

“During the parade I suddenly realised I was standing on the spot I had first put on a Royal Navy uniform almost exactly 34 years later to the day.”

John can be sure that the family's reputation is in good hands as, during the passing out, Jack was presented with the prestigious Captain's Prize for Academic Achievement, awarded to the best sailor under training at Raleigh.

“I remember when I first joined and experienced sailors would tell me that the Navy wasn't what it used to be,” said John.

“But I think that sailors have always said that right back to the days of Nelson.

“Today's Navy is a lot smaller than when I joined, but far more technologically advanced.

“The naval tradition passes on to the next generation and it becomes their Navy. Well, I guess it's Jack's navy now.”

Jack will now begin his training as a Royal Navy chef, a very different career path from his father, who spent the majority of his time in submarines.

John, who started in the old P-class HMS Walrus, was a key member of the inaugural crew on board the Navy's newest submarine, HMS Astute.



● Cdr Dai Roberts (right) with Nebo of the US Navy

## Dai's in Kabul, but Tenby's on his mind

DESPITE the absence of seas for hundreds of miles, despite below-freezing temperatures and despite a war going on around them, an intrepid few braved the icy waters for the Kabul Boxing Day Swim.

In fact it was more of a freezing cold bucket of water being thrown over their heads, but times are hard and conditions tough out there.

Cdr Dai Roberts managed yet again to complete his own Boxing Day swim.

For the previous ten years he has organised the Virginia Beach Tenby



● 'Cags' Lacy during his days with 771 NAS

Picture: PO (Phot) Dave Gallagher

# Air, sea rescues

TWO Navy ratings have been commended for carrying out rescues, one by swimming out into a heavy surf and the other by plucking the crew of a stricken trawler to safety in a helicopter.

When a fishing boat capsized in high seas outside Porthleven harbour in early October, LA Michael Arrowsmith knew exactly what to do.

The junior rate, who works at the fire station at RNAS Culdrose, had been walking with a friend near the pier when he saw the Donna Mary being hit by a huge wave, pitching two men into the sea.

LA Arrowsmith rushed to

collect a buoyancy aid from the pier and ran towards the beach to assist the first crew member, who had been washed ashore and was struggling in the surf.

The second crew member was still in the water some way off the beach and LA Arrowsmith attempted to wade into the surf to throw the buoyancy aid to him.

By now five people had gathered on the beach to hold the rescue line as the sailor tried to throw it to the fisherman, despite being knocked off his feet by waves.

Due to the wind and wave conditions it proved impossible to get the buoyancy aid to the stricken man, so LA Arrowsmith decided to swim out to him.

Placing the buoyancy aid around his shoulder he waded into the water but found he was continually knocked off his feet.

He dived in to try to make ground but found that the buoyancy of the ring forced him back.

After several attempts, and becoming increasingly exhausted, LA Arrowsmith got within ten feet of him, but unable to make further progress, the sailor risked his own safety by removing the buoyancy aid from his shoulder and throwing it to the man.

A large wave forced Arrowsmith under water and at this point he communicated to the group ashore that he was unable to continue.

Some 15 minutes later a rescue helicopter from 771 SAR squadron at Culdrose winched the man to safety.

The junior rate's actions, which were taken in the knowledge that he might be jeopardising his own



● LA Michael Arrowsmith

safety, resulted in the CO of RNAS Culdrose, Capt Toby Williamson, presenting LA Arrowsmith with the Captain's Award for bravery.

Capt Williamson said: “This is one of the most deserving awards I have ever given.

“Arrowsmith's action demonstrated real bravery in action and I am proud to have him with us at Culdrose.”

Meanwhile, for his part in a difficult rescue at sea, POACMN 'Cags' Lacy has been awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal, presented by the Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace.

Late on New Year's Eve afternoon in 2009 Falmouth Coastguard received a mayday from trawler Trevesa, reporting a fire and loss of steering 50 miles south west of the Isles of Scilly, and that the four-man crew were abandoning ship.

Within an hour of the mayday, Rescue 193 arrived to be greeted by heavy rain, rough seas, 40-knot winds and pitch darkness.

The fishing vessel was dead in the water with no power so PO Lacy was lowered to the pitching deck to assess the situation.

On the first descent, PO Lacy managed to hook his heels over the guardrail, from where he tried to heave himself onto the deck, but a heavy swell caused the trawler to pitch and he fell backwards 20ft into the icy water.

'Cags' said: “I remember vividly looking up and seeing the green glow of the aircraft lights above me.

“In my headset I could hear someone onboard saying I was underwater. It was quite surreal.”

Submerged but still attached to the winch wire, he was recovered back into the helicopter.

PO Lacy decided to go back down for a further attempt to board the vessel and the aircraft was positioned for a second time.

This time a successful hi-line transfer was conducted and, despite the heavy and unpredictable roll of the vessel, PO Lacy co-ordinated the safe evacuation of all four men, which took some 50 minutes in the appalling conditions.

Cags has now left the RN and is working for AgustaWestland at Newquay Airport, where he is an instructor at the Operational Flying Training Centre.

He has maintained his links with the Navy as a member of the RNR Air Branch where he continues to provide part-time support to 771 Search and Rescue NAS.

## BRNC has global appeal

A BRIEF glance at the list of visitors to Britannia Royal Naval College since September reveals a truly cosmopolitan range of both countries and cultures.

Setting aside the international officers on the RN Young Officers Course, which routinely embraces over 20 countries, Dartmouth staff and cadets have welcomed both junior and senior representatives from countries across the globe.

From Bangladesh to Peru and the United States to Korea there is considerable international interest in the training undertaken at BRNC.

Every term there are strong links fostered between BRNC and its French and German counterpart colleges, and there is a permanent presence from those nations with two liaison officers fully integrated on the staff.

Following a recent visit by the Commodore BRNC to the Dalian Academy of the People's Liberation Army (Navy) in China, it is hoped that during 2011 RN cadets will have the opportunity to experience training there and a small group of PLA(N) midshipmen will spend time at BRNC.

## Fledgling aviators graduate

YEARS of hard work and effort finally came to fruition as one of the largest courses in recent years graduated with flying colours from 848 NAS at Yeovilton – the 'Jungle Training Academy'.

The day was all the more special for the students as the Duke of York – Commodore-in-Chief Fleet Air Arm and a former Navy pilot – presented their 'wings'.

Individual prizes were also awarded to the fledgling aviators, including the Westland's prize to Lt Wallace as best overall student and the Bill Murton trophy presented to Lt Bayliss, who best personified the Commando aviation ethos.

For the six pilots, the last eight months of Commando-role Sea King flying training at 848 NAS was the culmination of over two years of their lives, which included over six months in Lincolnshire flying the fixed-wing Firefly trainer, six months in Shropshire flying the Squirrel helicopter, as well as studying on a multitude of ground-based courses.

The story differs slightly for the three Commando Aircrewmembers – their efforts at 848 NAS over the past 20 weeks were preceded by four weeks of aviation military skills training at RAF Henlow and RAF St Mawgan, five weeks initial flying grading, five weeks basic ground school and seven weeks navigation instruction at RAF Shawbury, followed by four weeks winchman training at RAF Valley.

## Brothers at the double

TWO sets of brothers have been serving together in frigate HMS Northumberland.

For one pair it was their 'home' warship, as Richy and Paul Coleman (bottom right) hail from Longhoughton, in Northumberland.

Richy (on right), a leading engineer technician (marine engineer), said: “It's been great to catch up and serve with my older brother over the past three months since I joined the ship – he's been on board a lot longer and has completed the full eight months of the deployment.”

Paul is a petty officer (underwater weapons) in the frigate, and there is a third brother who goes to work in a dark blue suit – Mark, the third brother, is a leading engineer aircraft technician in the Fleet Air Arm.

Two more brothers-in-arms on board Northumberland were the Biggars (top right), from Glenrothes, who were reunited in the ship during the Calash 10 deployment.

Marc and Ryan joined the Royal Navy after attending Auchmuty High School and

now enjoy flourishing careers in the Royal Navy.

Marc (on right) is an able seaman (computer and information systems) rating, working in the main communications office.

He said: “It's great to catch up again with my little brother who has been serving in HMS Northumberland for the past eight months away from the UK.

“I've been ashore on crew rotation as my partner, Samantha, has just had our first child, Logan.”

Ryan, an engineer technician (marine engineer), said: “It's tough at times being below decks working in the ship's machinery spaces when we visit exotic places.

“But it's balanced with a decent amount of time off and I get the opportunity to play sport – I've played football for the Navy for the last two years as far afield as Dallas in Texas, and hope to go again this year.”

Northumberland returned to her home base of Devonport, Plymouth, at the end of last year.







# 'ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY'

## Invitation to the parade

THE General Secretary of the RNA has issued an invitation to all associations and individuals with a Naval background to join shipmates on their big parade in London in September.

In his 'open letter from the RNA', S/M Paul Quinn says: "The Royal Naval Association will be holding its Biennial Parade at the Cenotaph at Whitehall on Sunday September 11 2011.

"Associations and individuals related to the Naval Service are cordially invited to march with their Shipmates and to parade their standards with the RNA National standard and RNA Area and Branch standards.

"Those interested should contact Nigel Huxtable on 023 9272 3747 or at [nigel@royalnavalassoc.com](mailto:nigel@royalnavalassoc.com) or the General Secretary Capt Paul Quinn at [paul@royalnavalassoc.com](mailto:paul@royalnavalassoc.com), who will provide more details.

"Yours in comradeship, Paul Quinn."

## Legacy project

FILM company Legasee is seeking war veterans who would like their stories filmed for posterity as part of a social history project.

Legasee is developing an online resource of filmed interviews featuring ex-campaigners for use by schools, colleges, and members of the public.

Anyone interested should contact Legasee by phone, email or by letter, giving name, age, daytime phone number and brief details of wartime service.

Email [dave@legasee.org.uk](mailto:dave@legasee.org.uk), telephone 01992 719363, or write to Legasee, 27 Government Row, Enfield Lock, London EN3 6JN.

The Legasee project is completely free of charge, with any travel expenses paid.

See [www.legasee.org.uk](http://www.legasee.org.uk) for further information.

## New advisor

SHIPMATE Mick Kieran has been elected as the National Ceremonial Advisor.

He will assume the full duties at the end of the conference parade and wreath-laying, and will understudy until then.

And talking of the conference, please remember that motions and amendments for debate should reach the General Secretary by February 11.

# Service remembers victims of collision

MORE than 200 people turned up for the 61st memorial service for the 64 men who died when HMS Truculent sank in the Thames following a collision with a merchantman.

The service, at the St George's Centre, Chatham, was held on the

nearest Saturday to the anniversary of the sinking, January 12, to enable more people to attend – a decision which was justified by the numbers.

Truculent was lost when she collided with the Swedish tanker Divina eight miles off Sheerness on the evening of January 12 1950, a cold, clear night.

There was confusion over the lights carried by Divina, and by the time evasive action was taken it was too late.

The small tanker, carrying paraffin down the Thames, sliced into the T-boat, almost knocking her flat; the two vessels remained locked together for several seconds before Truculent sank.

The men on board who survived the initial collision waited in the dark on the sea bed until they believed it would be safe to escape, rescue vessels having been alerted.

But when they made their escape they found no alarm had been raised, and although Divina and another freighter, the Dutch ship Almdijk, picked up 20 men between them, another 57 were swept to their deaths by the strong, icy current.

A total of 64 men died – the crew had been augmented on that trial run by dockyard workers who had been involved in her refit at Chatham.

The ceremony also remembers the five-strong crew of a Coastal Command Lancaster patrol aircraft from RAF Kinloss which had been tasked to pick up divers for the subsequent rescue mission, but which crashed on take-off, killing all on board.

Organised by the Medway

Towns branch of the Submariners

Association, the event began

with a piper – WO2 Kerr from

the Royal Engineers Brompton

Barracks – playing as the guests

and congregation arrived.

Sea Cadets helped run an

efficient car-parking operation,

manned the doors and provided a

guard at the entrance.

Guests included the Mayor of Medway David Brake and the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Brig John Meardon.

A total of 18 standards were paraded, including the National Standard, standards from the Royal British Legion, the RAF, Royal Engineers, Merchant Navy and various Submariners Association branches, some of which were brought considerable distances to support the event.

The service was conducted by Rev David Preston, and the sermon given by Rev Gordon Warren RN.

Wreaths were laid, standards paraded and Medway Towns branch chairman S/M Archie Watt read the dedication.

The organist accompanied the ceremony in the manner in which submariners like to sing their hymns – swiftly and with gusto.

The service over, all headed to tables laden with food, prepared and supplied by the wives of branch members and the "tame Medway Towns branch chef", S/M Dave Scott.

There was, naturally, the obligatory tot or two alongside the other drinks.

And while eating, those who attended the service could contemplate a superb model of a submarine, made by Ernie Weeks and placed on an elevated table behind the food.

And the branch's artist, Bill Vowden – responsible for the painting of the Truculent which is used on the group's greetings cards – set up a number of tables from which he sold original paintings for the benefit of the Truculent Fund.

## Plea for help with FitzRoy's tomb

THE final resting place of one of the Royal Navy's most influential sons is in need of refurbishment.

Paul Owens has contacted *Navy News* to raise awareness of an appeal to renovate the grave of Admiral Robert FitzRoy, the father of weather forecasting.

The tomb and memorial stone, lie in the churchyard of All Saints in Upper Norwood, London.

"Our church is sadly lacking funds and volunteers to assist in this project, and we thought it would be appropriate to contact *Navy News* to plead for any help from your readership," said Paul.

"Next year is the 150th anniversary of public weather forecasts and the Met Office will mark this with various events which will be widely reported in the press.

"We would like to offer *Navy News* and your readership an invite to join in and give the Admiral the recognition, and his grave the restored glory, he so richly deserves through his dedication to the Navy and public life."

FitzRoy was the CO of HMS Beagle for the voyage of discovery undertaken by Charles Darwin – but the Naval officer was just as active in the field of science.

He was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and was put in charge of a new department set up to gather weather data at sea – the forerunner of the Met Office.

The innovative FitzRoy advanced many initiatives which improved safety at sea, and was the first to formally forecast weather patterns.

He was also a hero to fishermen and other mariners through his pioneering storm-warning system.

Contact the appeal team at [fitzroyappeal@yahoo.com](mailto:fitzroyappeal@yahoo.com)



● Lt Noel Cashford praises the work of wartime comrades aboard HMS Belfast in 2009

Picture: PO(Phot) Mez Merrill

## UXB hero dies

THE Navy has lost a key link with its greatest generation with the death of legendary wartime bomb disposal officer Noel Cashford.

Lt Cashford, who has died aged 88, rendered more than 200 unexploded bombs and other devices safe during WW2 and its immediate aftermath.

He always played down his bravery saying simply: "I had my moments", but his selfless actions meant he was appointed an MBE at the war's end.

Although he left the Service in 1947 he remained passionate about the wartime work of his

comrades, supporting efforts to erect monuments, attending memorial services, giving speeches and compiling four books on the exploits of WW2 bomb disposal men.

"Today's generation should know about the heroes of yesteryear and those who do the same dangerous job today," he said at 70th anniversary commemorations of the first German magnetic mine being defused by his friend Lt Cdr John Ouvry.

Lt Cashford was believed to be the last surviving naval wartime bomb and mine disposal officer.

"Over the past ten years, I have come to rely on Noel as a living link with our wartime explosive ordnance disposal heritage and will dearly miss his friendship, knowledge and valuable advice," said Lt Cdr Rob Hoole, vice chairman of the Minewarfare and Clearance Diving Officers Association.

## Protector date

THE HMS Protector Association annual reunion is to be held at the Royal Court Hotel, Coventry, from April 29 to May 2.

Further details from Doug Harris at [dougatspindrift@aol.com](mailto:dougatspindrift@aol.com), or see the website [www.hmsprotector.org](http://www.hmsprotector.org) where you can also download booking forms.



● From left: Plymouth branch secretary Arthur Gutteridge, Lady Mayoress Kate Aspinall, Lord Mayor Mary Aspinall, Plymouth branch chairman Bob Palmer and mess vice president MAA Korina 'Jesse' James

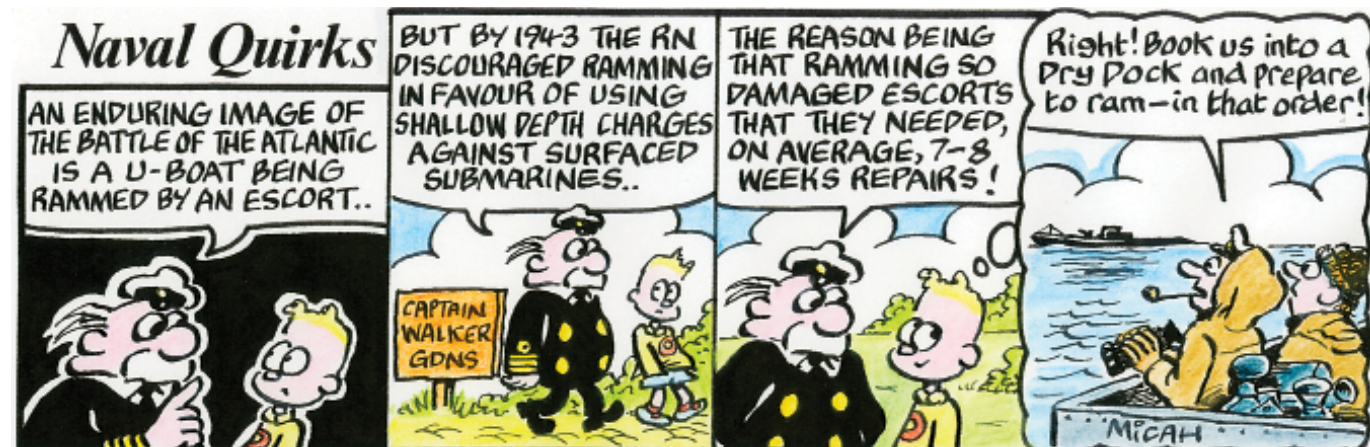
## Showcase event is a success

MORE than 200 members of Plymouth branch and their guests turned out in their finery for the showcase event of the year – the annual dinner and dance.

Among the guests were the Lord and Lady Mayoress of Plymouth, Mary and Kate Aspinall, RNA national vice president Cdre Adrian Nance and branch president Cdre Steve Dearden.

Branch chairman S/M Bob Palmer thanked staff

at the Warrant Officers and Senior Rates Mess at HMS Drake for their efforts, social secretary S/M Sue Gutteridge and her team for once again ticking all the boxes, and the Sea Cadets of TS Manadon and TS Golden Hind for their immaculate ceremonial turn-out, as well as mess president 'Dino' Lawson and his mess members for allowing the branch to use the superb venue.



## SHIP of the MONTH

### Collectors' Corner

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(Older photographs will be in Black & White)



## New home opened in Weymouth

A NEW home for homeless and vulnerable ex-Servicemen and women has opened in Weymouth.

Alabaré's Weymouth Home for Veterans, situated in the Lodmoor area, is backed by the Royal British Legion.

It offers a combination of accommodation and support to ex-Service personnel who are struggling to adjust to civilian life, providing a safe environment in which veterans can rebuild their confidence and develop essential skills whilst working towards being able to live independently again.

Support will be provided in areas such as education, employment and housing, and veterans will be encouraged to access specialist help for issues such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, other mental health conditions or drug and alcohol addiction.

Veterans will also be able to develop life skills such as budgeting and maintaining a home, skills they may never have needed whilst serving in the Forces.

Figures from the RBL highlight the need that exists in Dorset for veterans' support; last year their records showed that in the county the number of veterans sleeping rough or in emergency temporary accommodation increased by almost 50 per cent.

The RBL's Director of Welfare, Sue Freeth, said: "Support to homeless veterans has been a priority for us for some time and this marks another step in increasing vital services in local hot spots."

The Legion awarded a grant of £180,000 over three years to the home, which is based on the model of the charity's Plymouth Home for Veterans, opened in partnership with the RBL in 2009.

Within its first week of opening the Plymouth project was full and demand for places has remained extremely high.

Alabaré also opened a Bristol Home for Veterans last November, and is hoping to open further similar projects across the South and South West.



● No gold at the end of this rainbow, according to S/M Eric Dempster of the HMS Ocean Association. S/M Eric headed across from Stirling to Glenmullan on Loch Long when he heard HMS Ark Royal was unloading ammunition at the facility. "The weather was foul, with wind, rain and mist on the hills, but coming down the hill from above the base there was an unexpected break in the cloud and the sun came out for approximately 15 minutes," said S/M Eric. "As it was still raining this produced an intense rainbow over the ship. There didn't seem to be anyone else taking shots and presumably on the ship they couldn't see the backdrop unfolding."

# Taiwan POWs not forgotten

LAST year may have marked 65 years since the end of World War 2, but the pace is not slackening for one man.

S/M Michael Hurst heads the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society, which aims to keep alive the memory of those held in Japanese camps on the island, and to continue to search for survivors from the period 1942-45.

The group also helps organise the memorial service at Jinguashi every November, and seeks to educate the people of the Republic of China over this little-known part of their history.

The society was approached last year by a film production company in Singapore to ask if S/M Hurst could help with a programme they were making on Taiwan for the History Channel, acting as consultant and film subject on the section on POWs.

S/M Hurst's contribution was to show the presenter, Anthony Morse, around the Heito Camp at PingTung, including the sugar factory and plantation where POWs were forced to clear the land for crops.

The remembrance week visit to Taiwan in November saw a group of 13 overseas guests travel to the Far East, most from the UK along with one from the USA and one from Australia – though

sadly there were no former POWs among them, age being something of a barrier to many.

Among the places visited were the site of the former Kinkaseki POW camp at Jinguashi and the mine in which the prisoners suffered at the hands of Japanese guards, as well as the port of Keelung, where POWs were landed and from where liberated men were evacuated at the end of the war.

Looking ahead, new monuments and features are planned at the Taiwan POW Memorial Park in Jinguashi, which S/M Hurst has been asked to help design.

These could include a polished black granite wall, similar to the Vietnam Wall in Washington DC, containing the names of all 4,365 Taiwan POWs, and a bronze statue of two POWs helping each other, entitled 'Mates'.

It is hoped the monuments will be ready for the remembrance visit in November this year.



● Essex FAAA branch chairman S/M Harry Bass is presented with a framed picture of a Merlin helicopter of 814 NAS by LAET Dan Macedo (left) and LAET Roy Ogonda

## Taranto gathering

THE TOP man may have been missing, but there was still a strong team from the Navy's aviation arm at the Taranto Lunch staged by the Essex branch of the Fleet Air Arm Association.

Chief of Staff (Aviation and Carriers) Rear Admiral Tom Cunningham was called away on Service business at short notice.

But there was still Cdr Geoff Bowker, who recently joined the Military Aviation Authority, and LAET's Roy Ogonda and Daniel Mecedo, representing 814 Naval Air Squadron, which is affiliated to the Essex branch.

Branch chairman S/M Harry Bass gave a resumé of that famous battle where four Naval Air Squadrons flying from HMS Illustrious sank or crippled half of the Italian fleet in Taranto.

It is hoped that a framed picture of one of 814 Squadron's Merlins, presented by the LAETs, can be displayed in the RAF Association Club in Chelmsford, where Essex branch members meet.

Shipmates are now looking forward to events such as the annual Memorial Observation, at Eastchurch on Friday May 6 2011.

## Corvette memorial is restored

A MEMORIAL plaque to a wartime corvette has been rededicated after it was destroyed by vandals on Armistice Day.

The plaque to Flower-class escort HMS Dahlia was part of the street name sign at the entrance to Dahlia Close in Cheshunt.

It was originally unveiled in 1997 as a reminder of the ship and her company – the corvette, which survived the war and was scrapped in 1948, had been adopted by Cheshunt and Waltham Cross during World War 2.

Members of Cheshunt branch, local residents and police officers watched as the Mayor of Broxbourne, Cllr Mark Mills-Bishop, conducted the dedication ceremony, though the two remaining crew members, S/Ms Bengy Benjamin and Neville Doyle, who were at the 1997 event, were unable to make it this time.

Cheshunt branch padre Rev 'Mother Jane' Dicker led the consecration service and blessed the plaque with holy water.

The Last Post and Reveille were sounded, and branch president S/M Peter Trigg made the remembrance address.



● Robert Treadwell's medal and memorabilia concerning the rescue attempt on Chesil Beach

## Former sailor's gallantry medal goes to museum

A RARE sea gallantry medal awarded posthumously in 1944 to a heroic coastguard was due to be presented to the National Museum of the Royal Navy as *Navy News* went to press.

The Silver Sea Gallantry Medal awarded to Coastguardsman Robert Treadwell in late 1944, along with extensive research notes, photographs and original documents, has been offered to the museum by Robert Treadwell's stepson Raymond Morris.

On October 13 1944 HMLCT(A) 2454 – a landing craft tank (armoured) – was battered by a Force 9 gale whilst en route from Dartmouth to Portland.

Her engine failed, and as she dragged her anchor and rescue teams prepared to help, she was dashed onto the shingle bank at Chesil Beach in Dorset, where she broke her back.

The local Coastguard Rocket Lifesaving Company, based at Wyke Regis, were already on the scene and managed to get lines across, but according to the official Board of Trade citation at the time ten of the crew of 12 were washed overboard, together with the lines, by 30ft waves crashing onto the beach and stricken landing craft.

Two of the sailors were plucked from the sea by the shore party, but the other eight drowned.

Two Coastguard officers, Cdr John Legh, Coastguard Inspector of the Southern Division, and Coastguardsman Treadwell, aged 35 – both former Royal Navy men – ran into the seething waves in an attempt to pass the lines by hand to the two sailors still on board the vessel, but both were dragged

from the beach by the surf and drowned.

Three of their colleagues tried again, but were beaten back.

In an amazing feat of stamina and fortitude, Auxiliary Coastguard George Brown endured the surf for more than 30 minutes and managed to get aboard the landing craft and pass lines to the two remaining crewmen.

Brown and one of the crew were hauled to safety, but the other line parted.

Albert Oldfield, another Auxiliary Coastguard, managed to get a line to the last crewman, who was also rescued.

Robert Treadwell's body was washed ashore in Chesil Cove the following day, and he was buried in the RN cemetery in Portland.

The Coastguardsman had served as a Signalman since 1925, and his service had ended on his 30th birthday – a few months before the outbreak of war, when he transferred to the Coastguard.

He and Cdr Legh were posthumously awarded the silver medal, as was George Brown, who was also awarded the Royal Humane Society Silver Medal and the Stanhope Gold Medal for the bravest rescue of 1944.

The Silver Sea Gallantry Medal is extremely rare – only seven were awarded between 1937 and 1947, and none have been awarded since at least 1974, though the bronze version was last awarded in 1989.

Former Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey, now Chief Executive of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, was scheduled to attend the ceremony in Portsmouth.

## £50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery submarine in our December edition (right) was HMS Porpoise.

The winner of our £50 prize was Mr M Green of Wallsend, Tyne and Wear, and the winner of the bottle of Wood's Old Navy Rum was Mr G Drake, of Castleford, West Yorkshire.

This month we have the name ship of her class (pictured above) which played a key role in the evacuation of a remote community in the South Atlantic following a volcanic eruption in the early 1960s.

What was her name, and what was the name of the island she helped?

We have removed her name and pennant number from the picture.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH.



Coupons giving the correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Closing date for entries is March 14 2011. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our April edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

### MYSTERY PICTURE 192

Name .....

Address .....

My answers .....



# Pay Colonel briefs on allowances changes

**CHANGES to Service Personnel Allowances – a message from the Royal Navy Pay Colonel, Capt John Lavery:**

I am conscious that many readers will be aware of the recent announcements heralding adjustments to some elements of the pay and allowances of Service personnel.

The article below provides general details to add to the information already provided to our sailors and marines.

The language is somewhat formal but it is offered in such a way as to minimise any misunderstanding of the changes that all of us in uniform are about to experience.

Changes to the Service allowance package as a result of the requirement to achieve a significant reduction in the annual spend on allowances were recently announced in DIB 04/11, with the specific changes to Continuity of Education Allowances (CEA) announced in December in DIB 95/10.

The Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) White Paper presented the Armed Forces with a challenging requirement to achieve £250 million savings from the current expenditure on Service allowances by April 2014.

In order to achieve this target, substantial changes to a number of allowances and other targeted pay measures are to be made this year and the year after.

The impact that these changes will have on many Service personnel and their families has been acknowledged by the Principal Personnel Officers, Service Chiefs and by the Secretary of State for Defence, however they have been recognised, and reluctantly accepted, as part of the wider savings that Defence has to make at this time.

Key changes to allowances as a result of the savings measures are summarised below, however personnel are encouraged to refer to the DIBs and, if at all unsure, or concerned about how the changes might affect them or their family, to seek further advice from Unit HR Administration staff, or the chain of command.

It is acknowledged that allowances policy is frequently complex, and therefore the detail of some of the measures below may be difficult to understand when viewed in isolation.

However, while further simplification of allowances remains an enduring theme within policy development, it is important to appreciate that many of the complex regulations have been put in place to ensure that reducing resources remain appropriately targeted.

Changes to allowances that will take place from May 1 2011 are as follows:

■ **Home to Duty Travel (Public) (HDT (Public)):** The personal contribution to HDT(Public) will be increased from one to nine

miles, aligning it with the level of contribution already made by claimants of HDT (Private).

The measure will be implemented in three stages over two years, and will increase from one mile to three miles from April 1 2011, from three to six miles from April 1 2012 and six to nine miles from April 1 2013.

This will mean that those Naval personnel who live in publicly funded accommodation (eg SLA, SSSA, SFA or SSFA) less than these distances from their Duty Station will be ineligible for financial support for their commute to and from work.

■ **Disturbance Allowance (DA):** The rates for Privately Owned and Privately Rented Accommodation will be aligned to the SFA rate. All DA rates will be reduced by 10 per cent, to £966 for SFA and £83 for SLA. The Child Element of DA will also reduce by 51 per cent to £75.

■ **Incidental Expenses (IE):** IE in the UK and overseas will be removed, except for those Service personnel hospitalised as in-patients.

■ **Day Subsistence (DS):** The upper limit for UK DS will be reduced from a capped maximum of £26.28 to £25 per day. Rates of overseas DS will be reduced by 4.9 per cent, which is proportionate to the reduction in UK DS.

■ **Local Overseas Allowance (LOA):** The changes to LOA which will take effect from May 1 2011 include the application of revised UK spend data to update the LOA rate tables; the removal of one set of three 'Bett Nights' worldwide from the LOA construct; the introduction of a revised Factor Plan, which will be based on three levels (or salary bands) of LOA for Main Stations, rather than the current 13 level LOA Factor Plan which is based on rank; a reduction in the rates of LOA paid to those personnel temporarily serving overseas on Exercise/Field Conditions from 50 per cent to 40 per cent and Temporary Duty or Seagoing LOA rates from 75 per cent to 60 per cent, and the removal of payment of this allowance in respect of dependant children over 18 or those who have completed the A-level stage of education.

A number of further changes will be made to the LOA rules, known as 'Conventions', globally on April 1 2012. Although the overall effect of these global changes to Conventions is that LOA rates in most LOA Main Station areas are likely to fall, the Conventions work is merely an update of current lifestyles abroad.

Additionally, a number of specific changes will be made to the application of the Conventions for LOA areas in North West Europe.

■ **Living Out Supplemented Rates of LOA (LOSLOA):** The rate calculation method will be changed, although recipients of this allowance will continue to

receive the appropriate rate of single/unaccompanied LOA.

Eligibility criteria will also be adjusted to ensure that maximum use of Service messing, if available at an individual's Duty Station, is made by those accommodated within a reasonable travelling distance.

■ **Continuity of Education Allowances (CEA):** Changes to the eligibility rules and the governance of claims for the allowance will be introduced with effect from April 1 2011.

The most significant change to the current rules withdraws the eligibility for CEA from personnel who serve unaccompanied by their families in some locations, principally MOD London, certain positions in JFHQ and in designated seagoing billets in ships and submarines.

Transitional arrangements have been put in place to ensure individuals who are currently drawing CEA under these 'involuntarily separated' rules will not be unfairly disadvantaged by the removal of this concession.

Further changes include an automatic review of entitlement after two assignments rather than three when the claimant's family home has not relocated, the removal of the 'Sibling Rule' and the aggregation of claims from the CEA regulations, and the establishment of a team to ensure compliance with the regulations.

In addition to the measures described above, the Secretary of State has directed that a review of CEA should be conducted given the current financial climate and the need to be clear that expenditure on this allowance is fully justified.

The review team are now entering a wide-ranging consultation phase and some Naval personnel may have already received a short e-survey for completion. This provides an opportunity for the RN to directly inform the review process. The results of this review will be announced in the spring.

■ **School Children's Visits (SCV):** The parental contribution to SCV will be increased from 50 miles to 100 miles per single journey and the allowance will be withdrawn for children who have completed the A-level stage of education, but are studying for a first degree.

■ **Motor Mileage Allowance (MMA):** The MMA Converted



Leave Rate (for leave travel) which is currently paid at 31p per mile, will be aligned with the MMA Private Car Rate (for duty travel) at the lower HMRC approved mileage rate, currently 25p per mile.

This will result in a reduction in MMA paid to recipients of Get You Home (Seagoers) and GYH (Early Years) of approximately 20 per cent. The MMA Official Duty Rate (ODR) will be removed from the regulations as it is rarely able to be used under Service regulations.

■ **Get You Home (GYH):** All GYH allowances are generated by MMA CLR and will reduce accordingly to 25p per mile (from 26p for GYH (Travel) and 31p for other GYH rates).

This will result in a reduction in rates of GYH (Travel) by approximately 4 per cent and GYH (Seagoers) and GYH (Early Years) by approximately 20 per cent.

■ **Get You Home (Early Years) (GYH (EY)) and (Early Years) (Overseas Assistance) (GYH (EY)(OA)):** Entitlement to these allowances will be removed at the end of Phase 1 Training or at the age of 18, whichever is the later.

■ **Get You Home (Seagoers):** Entitlement to this allowance will be reduced from 12 to ten journeys per leave year.

■ **Food and Incidentals Allowance (FIA):** FIA will be reduced from £12.41 to £8.50 per day following adjustment to the rate calculation methodology for this allowance.

As with LOSLOA, the eligibility criteria will also be adjusted to ensure that maximum use of Service messing, if available at an individual's Duty Station, is made by those who are accommodated within a reasonable travelling distance.

■ **Special Messing Allowance (SMA):** The rate calculation methodology for this subsistence allowance will be changed to 75 per cent of the relevant DS rate for the overseas country.

SMA is unlike DS, which sets a maximum but only allows for actual expenditure. In reality, like all of us, on some days individuals buy a cheap snack and on others they eat a more expensive meal.

■ **Privately Arranged Passage (PAP):** The criteria for reimbursement of expenses will be adjusted so that all PAP refunds are based on pre-booked non-flexible economy class air fares only and any associated accommodation and subsistence costs will become a personal liability.

■ **Recruitment and Retention Allowance (RRA(L)):** From April 1 2012, provided that retention of this allowance is recommended by the AFPRB, Service personnel above the ranks of Leading Rate/Corporal will no longer be eligible for RRA(L).

IN ADDITION to the allowance savings measures, changes will also be made to a number of other targeted pay measures, as follows:

■ **Specialist Pay (Reserve Banding) (RB):** From April 1 2012, Specialist Pay (RB) will be reduced from the current six-year system to a three-year system.

Specialist Pay (RB) will be paid at 100 per cent for the first two years, followed by 50 per cent for year three and zero per cent from year four onwards.

Additionally, from April 1 2012, the Premature Voluntary Release (PVR) rate of Specialist Pay will be reduced from 50 per cent to zero per cent.

Separately, all current forms of Specialist Pay will be reviewed by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) during 2011.

■ **Commitment Bonuses:** There will be no change to existing CB arrangements for personnel who commenced Phase 1 training before January 20 2011. A new CB scheme will be introduced for new entrants who start Phase 1 training on or after this date.

The CB scheme for new entrants will be set a maximum value of £7,500 (gross) for eligible personnel. A separate DIN outlining this change will be published shortly.

■ **Financial Incentive Schemes (FIS):** Recognising that Force Structures will be changing as a result of SDSR announcements, FIS (eg Golden Hellos, Financial Retention Incentives and Rejoining and Transfer Bounties) will be reviewed to ensure that there remains a requirement for their payment.

Information on changes to any existing schemes will be provided as soon as reviews have been completed.

THE CHANGES to allowances and other targeted savings measures are recognised by all as painful, but the current financial position has placed pressure on the level of allowances that are affordable.

It is important to remember however, that although measures needed to be taken to better target allowances to where the need is greatest, please be reassured that an appropriate allowance package will continue to be at the top of the Second Sea Lord's agenda in the future.

## DEFENCE INTERNAL BRIEFS

02/11: Registering for Service Pupil Premium: On Monday December 13 2010 the Department for Education announced the details of the school funding settlement for 2011-12. This included details of the local authority Dedicated Schools Grant allocations and the level of the Pupil Premium.

03/11: Joint message from Chief of the Defence Staff and Permanent Under Secretary: Meeting the challenges of 2011. Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Sir David Richards and Permanent Under Secretary (PUS) Ursula Brennan, issued a joint message to all defence staff reflecting on progress made in 2010 and setting the priorities for the year ahead.

04/11: SDSR Implementation: Changes to Service Personnel Allowances: The Strategic Defence and Security Review set out a requirement to reduce expenditure on Service and Civil Service allowances amounting to some £300 million per year. Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, Andrew Robathan, announced the package of measures to be implemented for the Armed Forces.

## GALAXY MESSAGES

Galaxy 01-2011: 1SL Strategic Priorities for the Naval Service 2011.

Galaxy 02-2011: CinCFleet's Direction and Guidance: CinCFleet issues his Direction and Guidance for 2011

Galaxy 03-2011: Second Sea Lord's priorities for the 2011 Spring term.

## DEFENCE INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTICES

DIN2011 DIN01-019: JPA Appraisal: Non-Standard Appraisal Reports (NSARs)

DIN2011 DIN01-016: Naval Service Redundancy Programme – Excluded Cadres

DIN2011 DIN01-014: Pre-Deployment Fertility Preservation

DIN2011 DIN01-012: Tri-Service Fiji Support Network (FSN) brief for UK based Service personnel 7-11 February 7-11 2011

DIN2011 DIN07-022: Joint and Single Service Security, Language, Intelligence, Photographic and Geo-Spatial Training courses for TY 2011/12

DIN2011 DIN10-001: Royal Navy Show Jumping and Eventing Team – dates for team selection 2011

## ROYAL NAVY TEMPORARY MEMORANDA

Issue 01/11 RNTM 001/11: The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity – Naval Service Amenity Fund approved grants

Issue 01/11 RNTM 002/11: The Royal Navy and Royal Marine Charity – Naval Service Amenity Fund

Issue 01/11 RNTM 003/11: Personnel wishing to leave the Naval Service early – Additional guidance for 2011

Issue 01/11 RNTM 007/11: Introduction of the Competitive Gliding Course (RN) June 12-17 2011

Issue 01/11 RNTM 009/11: Additional funding to State schools educating Service children – The Service Pupil Premium

Issue 01/11 RNTM 012/11: Management of leave in the Naval Service

Issue 01/11 RNTM 013/11: Additional Public Holiday for the Royal Wedding on April 29 2011

Issue 01/11 RNTM 014/11: HMS Chatham decommissioning and disposal

Issue 01/11 RNTM 015/11: Divisional training in the Royal Navy

## Wikileaks wary

A REMINDER to people that due to the potential threat of malware staff are not to access or download on to official systems material originally leaked from Wikileaks.

This includes direct downloads and bringing the material in via email, discs or pensticks.

If you have a genuine business need, arrangements can be put in place to access the material.



## Montrose is tops for stokers

THE Marine Engineers of HMS Montrose have notched up a top score, as they topped the tables in NVQ awards over the past academic year.

NVQs – or to give them their full name National Vocational Qualifications – are work-based awards achieved through assessment and training which require aspiring candidates to prove they have the ability to carry out their job to the required standard.

In conjunction with the Royal Naval School of Marine Engineering, the Engineering

Technicians (Marine Engineering) have been bagging NVQs through the academic year.

Even while enjoying the success of catching pirates on anti-piracy patrol off East Africa, the ship's ETMEs notched up two level 2 and two level 3 NVQs to add to the nine level 2 and two level 3s awarded over the previous 12 months.

Also, and rather handily, each NVQ earns HMS Montrose £250 for her Welfare Fund as part of the Fleet Award Scheme.

CMEM(M) 'Scotch' Bright said: "This is a great achievement

● (left to right: front) ET(ME)s James Thorpe, Matthew Keylock, Thomas Baxter, Kieran Breen, David Gibson, (back) Omar Jack, Luke Taylor, Ben Rees, Daniel Butt, (back centre) CMEM(M) 'Scotch' Bright







## Date set out for Armed Forces Day

ARMED Forces Day this year is planned for Saturday June 25.

The national event is planned for Edinburgh, but once again the whole nation will be encouraged to host regional events.

More details can be found in DIN 2010 09-008.

## Keep in the good books

THE book of books for Naval Personnel, BR3 Naval Personnel Management, is no longer a book, but an electronic book – found on the defence intranet and RN web homepage.

If you are making reference to any regulations please make sure that you are referring to online BR3 for the up-to-date, authoritative links.



● 35 years before he was WO1 Baz Cooke

## Baz, we'll miss you...

A STALWART of the Navy's Internal Comms team, WO1 Baz Cooke MSM MBE, is leaving the service this month.

This characterful senior rate is indeed not retiring, but moving on to fresh challenges... Who would have thought that unravelling the Navy's internal comms wasn't challenging enough!

Baz started his career in Raleigh, where one senior rate commented: "At Part II training, he shrank into the background, putting in the minimum effort necessary to survive!"

He didn't seem to do too badly in the end however... Baz is the proud bearer of an MBE and MSM, which we have repeatedly discarded due to the exigencies of Navy News housestyle but we thought we might include on this occasion.

## It's your 2-6

NEED to get your message across to the rest of the RN?

The 2-6 TV DVD and Navy News pages are here to spread the word. Your thoughts and opinions are invaluable.

Please forward any constructive ideas about what should be covered to:

■ RN IC hub – 93832 8809, 93832 8821, [FLEET-DCS-INFO-Media@Mailbox](mailto:FLEET-DCS-INFO-Media@Mailbox)

■ Pauline Aquilina, 9621 85984

# Redundancies – will you be affected?

HOWEVER unpalatable and unsettling, there is no getting away from the fact that Royal Navy and Royal Marines will have to lose approximately 5,000 personnel by 2015 in order to meet the manning requirements of the future Fleet.

Despite a number of personnel either completing their engagements or forecast to PVR within this timescale, this will still not add up to the required figure imposed on the Service by the Government and so a programme is needed to make around 3,000 Naval Personnel redundant.

This programme will be conducted in various stages, or tranches, starting in April this year and running until March 2014.

Galaxy 29-2010 (Naval Service Personnel Redundancy and Drawdown Programme) and 2011DIN01-016 (Naval Service Redundancy Programme – Excluded Cadres) have been published giving details of those groups of Service personnel who it is already known will not be considered for redundancy at any stage of the programme.

These groups have been excluded for reasons such as future branch sustainability and will thus be exempt from consideration during the redundancy programme.

A further DIN will be issued in early April giving the details of those categories, branches and specialisations of personnel – known as 'redundancy fields' – that will be considered by the first Redundancy Selection Boards.

The DIN will also announce any other groups identified that will be excluded from the programme.

The programme will be compulsory and decisions on who will have to leave the Service will be driven by the numbers and skills of people needed for the Fleet of the future.

Personnel who fall within the redundancy fields announced in April's DIN will be able to apply to be considered for redundancy if they so wish, although there is absolutely no guarantee that they will be chosen.

Also, it is inevitable that some of those who do not apply will be made redundant.

Applicants who are selected for redundancy will receive six months notice to leave the Service and those who do not apply but are made redundant will receive 12 months notice, although Career Managers may be able to allow people to leave earlier should they so wish.

There is nothing for you to do at this stage – wait until the DIN is issued in April.

To help you to work out how



● First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope briefs sailors on board HMS Kent on the day of the Strategic Defence and Security Review announcement

much money you might be entitled to by way of compensation if you are made redundant, in addition to the on-line Pensions calculator, a new Redundancy Benefit on-line calculator will be made available on the internet, and will be accessible via the MOD web, from March 2011.

For those with no access to the internet at all, direct contact will be made to ensure that everyone has the latest information and can make informed decisions.

Normal resettlement rules will apply to all personnel made redundant and resettlement offices are already gearing up to ensure they maintain their high level of service for all those leaving the Service.

We know that the redundancy programme will generate a huge amount of interest and many questions.

Answers to some of the questions can already be found in 2010DIN01-187 (Regular Armed Forces Redundancy Programme).

This DIN, the Galaxy mentioned above and further Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) can be found on the RN web page which will be the main portal for redundancy information as and when it is released.

It can be found in the RN Internal Communications hub page, accessible from the RN Web home page (RN Information).

Unit Admin Offices for Railcards and Photocards, and should be aware that there is currently a charge of £15 per railcard issued.

A railcard will not be considered valid if the applicant's title, name and initials are not in block capital letters, and if the Unit stamp is unclear or missing. An illegible date will also cause the train company to reject the railcard.

Provided the applicant's appearance has not changed significantly, the existing HM Forces Photocard should be used.

In addition, the Association of Train Operating Companies

There will also be a Redundancy Co-ordination Cell established in Navy Command Headquarters over the coming months to help personnel with any queries.

Contact details will be issued shortly.

In the meantime any queries should be directed to your Divisional Officer, Line Manager or Career Manager.

**Key dates** (which may vary either way by a few days)

April 4 2011: DIN announcing which specialisations/ branches are being considered for the first tranche and how to apply.

September 30 2011: Redundancy notices issued (DIN for second tranche released)

March 30 2012: All applicants selected for redundancy leave the Service.

September 30 2012: All non-applicants selected for redundancy leave the Service.

### DINs/Galaxy briefs

2010DIN01-187: Regular Armed Forces Redundancy Programme

Galaxy 29-2010: Naval Service Personnel Redundancy and Drawdown Programme

2010 DIN01-188: Redundancy Provisions for the Regular Armed Forces

2011 DIN01-016: Naval Service Redundancy Programme – Excluded Cadres

(ATOC) have agreed a special concession for widows, widowers, surviving civil partners and dependent children of a deceased service person retain the use of the railcard until its expiry date.

After this point, war widows, widowers and dependants can obtain railcards through the Royal British Legion for £15.

For fuller details on War Widows Railcards concessions, please contact the Pensions Department (Railcards) of the Royal British Legion on 0203 207 2164.

For full details on eligibility, use, misuse, loss, issue and procedures please see DIN 2010DIN 01-235.

# Keep up to speed with the NFF

KEEPING up to speed with all of the announcements and developments that 2011 is set to deliver could be one of the biggest challenges that Royal Navy and Royal Marines families face.

With this in mind the NFF has launched additional ways to assist with the communication flow.

Your experiences and comment inform meetings, forums and are key to our service providers gaining a full and undiluted view of Service family life.

The year 2010 saw the NFF represent these views at 343 diary commitments, please keep them coming...

### ■ E-Update

The NFF has launched its new e-update!

This email update provides a short, snappy roundup of news and information of interest to Royal Navy and Royal Marines families.

It will be issued every other month – the first in January 2011. It cherry-picks information from various sources and brings it all together on one neat little page.

If you would like to join the e-mailing list please email: [info@nff.org.uk](mailto:info@nff.org.uk) with your name.

If you would also like to receive our quarterly *Homeport* magazine please include your full postal address. Your details will not be passed on to any other organisations and you can unsubscribe from the mailing list at any time.

### ■ New NFF website poll

Have the recent announcements on pay and allowances made the serving person in your family reconsider their future in the Naval Service?

This is the question we are asking on our website poll and we are keen to know your thoughts.

Please take a moment to visit our website ([www.nff.org.uk](http://www.nff.org.uk)) and complete the poll at the top right of the screen. Your responses will be collated and fed back through to the MOD.

### ■ Homeport Revamp

Watch out for the new look *Homeport* magazine due to hit the streets in early March.

The spring 2011 edition will have a bright, fresh format with a dedicated section for Royal Marines.

Let us know your thoughts on the new design...

### ■ Families Continuous Attitude Survey (FCAS) 2011

The Families Continuous Attitude Survey was distributed mid-January. It is an opportunity for the spouses and partners of serving personnel to have their say. We encourage all those selected to complete the survey.

The Coalition Government has stated that the Armed Forces Covenant is one of their highest priorities, and that it will be the foundation of how the Government treats Service families and veterans.

If you receive a survey please don't miss your chance to have your say!

### ■ Continuity of Education Allowances: Changes to Regulations

Changes have been announced regarding the regulations that govern eligibility for Continuity of Education Allowances (CEA).

CEA rates have not been cut, however changes to eligibility rules and the governance of claims for the allowance will reduce spend. Claimants will retain the current levels of CEA support providing all eligibility criteria are



met under the new rules. These changes become effective from April 1 2011.

The changes to CEA are part of the Strategic Defence and Security Review. A full review of the broad range of allowances paid to Service personnel is ongoing; with further announcements on changes expected later in the year.

CEA rules will be amended in four main areas: the link between Involuntarily Separated Status (INVOLSEP) and CEA, the 'Sibling Rule', aggregation of claims and the number of assignments which trigger a formal review.

In addition to these measures, the Secretary of State has directed that a review of CEA should be conducted to ensure that this expenditure is fully justified. Results will be announced in spring.

■ **Changes to the pension and compensation packages** for dependants of Service personnel who die as a result of service while holding an *acting rank* were announced by Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox in December 2010.

There are two parts to the change, which aim to recognise acting rank in the payments made under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme 1975 and the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme to dependants of Service personnel killed as a result of service.

**Armed Forces Pension Scheme 1975 (AFPS 75):** Currently, under the AFPS 75, death benefits (a survivor's pension and lump sum) are calculated on the substantive rank held at the date of death, unless the individual held an acting rank for at least a year.

Death benefits will now be paid on the basis of the acting rank if the individual's death has occurred due to Service, regardless of how long the individual has been in the acting rank. These changes came into force on January 3 2011.

**Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS):** The dependants of those individuals holding an acting rank who have died as a result of Service since the AFCS came into force in April 2005, and whose pension benefits did not provide recognition of this acting rank, will receive a single payment of £20,000.

This is to compensate for the difference in both the lump sum and income stream that the dependants have received.

The changes to the AFCS are incorporated into legislation this month.

You are invited to become one of the growing number of NFF Facebook fans and Twitter followers to receive a Tweet or update whenever we post new items onto the website.

Your experiences form the basis of our discussions. To get in touch with the NFF: e-mail: [admin@nff.org.uk](mailto:admin@nff.org.uk), tel: 02392 654374 or write to: Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN

## Second look at the web

AS PART of an ongoing Government-wide initiative to reduce the number of websites, the MOD is in the process of consolidating its web presences.

This means that a number of websites will be brought under the MOD corporate or single Service banner.

The changes should bring compliance with Central Office of Information mandated web standards and guidelines.

Royal Navy and Royal Marine information will be collected under [www.royalnavy.mod.uk](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk).

For further information, see DIN 2010DIN 05-067.

## Getting your railcard

AN UPDATE on the means for obtaining your HM Forces Railcard can be found in DIN 2010DIN 01-235.

Eligibility for railcards includes:

■ all members of the Regular Forces

■ spouses and registered civil partners of personnel who are Personal Status Category (PSTAT) 1.

■ dependent children

Further up to four children can travel in first or standard with the railcard holder at a discounted rate.

Service personnel are to apply to



# Hints, tips and bye to myths

HINTS, tips and myth-busting brought to you by the team at *Naval Personnel Team (NPT) Warfare Officers Career Management*.

Happy New Year from the team at NPT (X) – we have restricted this article to two distinct areas:

■ Getting in touch with Career Managers, and;

■ Top tips with regard to JPA.

Below is some simple guidance that will make your Career Management easier:

**Getting in touch and career interviews**

■ **When to get in touch.**

You should make contact with your Career Manager (CM) with around 12 months left in post. Any earlier than this and we will not be able to gauge your performance to date. Any later, and forward planning time is reduced.

■ **How to get in touch.**

In general it is always best to discuss your plan with your Commanding Officer (CO) or Line Manager before making contact with your CM. For general enquiries and updates, an email is always preferable to a phone call. This will allow CMs time to examine the plan and come up with some options before replying.

■ **Why you should get in touch.**

We are interested if you



## Drafty's corner

preferences change, if you've moved house, if you have recently got married/divorced, had children etc. These are all factors that we would wish to be made aware of when managing your career.

■ **Career Interviews (CI).**

If you are content with your next assignment and do not require a more in-depth look at your

promotion or transfer prospects then you probably do not need a formal CI.

If you do, then a pro-forma will be sent out prior to the interview – please fill in as much as possible and be as honest as possible about your preferences, priorities and aspirations.

Please take some time to look at the timeline versus age and seniority. We will go through this during an interview and CMs can also let you know how you are scoring on the promotion board if applicable

**JPA and admin**

■ **JPA contact details.**

Please ensure your contact details as registered on JPA are up to date.

In many cases, this is the only information CMs have in order to contact you, please avoid putting your work address and email address down as the only details.

It should be fairly obvious to your CM which job you are in – far more useful is your civilian email address and an up to date mobile and home number.

■ **OJAR.**

It is important to ensure your OJAR page 1 is filled in carefully and correctly. Please take your time in completing the 'comments' and 'aspirations' area in particular

# Ignore pension changes at your peril

Can you keep track of all the issues that have had an impact on the Armed Forces Pension Scheme in the past five years, asks *Lt Cdr David Marsh, Pensions Secretary of the Armed Forces Pensions Society*, and the likely changes that are to be implemented in the next five years?

Here are some of the most important headings:

**Changes that are already in place**

■ Introduction of the new AFPS05 Pension Scheme and the rules surrounding the opportunity to transfer to the new scheme.

■ Change to the age that Pension Credit members can receive their portion of pension in respect of a Pension Sharing Order following divorce.

■ Changes to the rules on the eligibility to receive Resettlement and Life Commutation to those who apply after leaving the Armed Forces.

**Changes effective from April 2011**

■ Changes to the rules regarding qualification requirements for the award of an immediate pension for those on AFPS75 who are made redundant, together with a change to the amount of Special Capital Payment payable.

■ A reduction of over 80 per cent in the Annual Allowance a pension can increase by in value in a given year, before an Income Tax liability is due, bringing many more serving personnel into an area of taxation that they would not normally have expected to be part of.

■ The change of prices index used to increase pensions in issue or deferment from the RPI rate to the CPI rate.

**Expected changes by 2015**

■ Reduction in the Life Time Allowance from £1.8m to £1.5m.

■ The introduction of a brand new pension scheme that is not a final salary pension scheme.

As you can see, quite a radical shake-up in a world where the mere mention of the word 'pensions' is often sufficient to induce deep sleep, or at the very least, a roll of the eyes in a heavenly direction.

But ignore these things at your peril.

Over 80 per cent of the UK population have no form of income in retirement other than their Occupational/Private pensions, and their State Pension (which is also undergoing some major changes in the next five years or so – but I don't have time to touch on that here), so it is in your interest to know how all of these changes are going to affect you.

I have a strong suspicion that many of the younger readers will think that only the new pension scheme of the future might affect them, but I would be inclined to disagree.

The change in the index to be used to increase a pension once it is in payment will mean that the average Petty Officer will receive over £200,000 less in pension receipts in his lifetime (assuming he lives to an age of 85 – he is likely to live longer), on the assumption that there is an average difference of just 1 per cent between the RPI and CPI indexes. This year



alone there is a difference of 1.5 per cent!

There is never a better time to get to know your pension scheme better, and the changes which lie ahead, so you will be better prepared to take the correct administrative line – unlike many who buried their head in the sand when offered the chance to change to AFPS05, and now find themselves several thousand pounds out of pocket with no opportunity to change matters.

So, do yourself a favour and get ahead of the game.

Joining the Forces Pension Society would be a good start.

Members have access to extensive pension expertise which is independent of the Ministry of Defence, you'll get a full response, 'warts and all'.

You can join via our website at [www.forpen.co.uk](http://www.forpen.co.uk), or the Society on 020 7820 9988.

# NHS review under way for Forces prosthetics

CONCERN from Service veterans that the NHS may not be able to provide adequate prosthetic services has prompted the launch of a review into NHS services.

Service charities have informed the Department of Health that veterans who have lost limbs on active duty are unsure that the NHS can provide the same standard of prosthetic services as the Defence Medical

Service at Headley Court.

As part of their commitment to ensuring the best possible care for those who have served their country, the Government has launched this review, led by Dr Andrew Murrison MP, into the prosthetic services currently on offer, and how these can be strengthened to meet future demands.

In addition, the review will look at the future funding of

high-specification artificial limbs, regional variations, the transition from Forces' to NHS care, and the role of Service charities.

Health minister Simon Burns said: "Service personnel risk everything in the service of this country, and the NHS must provide the first-class care that these brave men and women rightly deserve and help to improve their health outcomes."

in order to fully inform your CM of your wishes.

In addition this is the first thing a promotion board will read and sets the tone of the report.

■ **Developed Vetting (DVs).**

If you are sent Developed Vetting Forms you must make them your number one priority. Fill them in quickly, accurately and completely. Photocopy every page and send them by recorded, next day delivery to the address provided.

Incorrect or incomplete forms will hamper the issuing of your DV which is essential for many assignments.

■ **Voluntary Outflow (VO).**

Please call and inform your CM before submitting Voluntary Outflow (VO or PVR in old money) for two reasons: often one or more of the deciding factors is a perception rather than reality

and secondly it allows the CM greater time to find a relief for you, particularly if you request a reduced notice period.

■ **RNFT.**

You must be in date for RNFT on the Common Reporting Date (CRD) if you are to be read for promotion (go forward to the board). Once selected you must be in date on the promotion date. In essence you should be in date for RNFT at all times!

It is your responsibility to ensure you are in date (or that a medical/operational waiver is registered) and that JPA reflects this (2010DIN01-024 refers).

Note, if you are serving on exchange abroad, it is your responsibility to get in touch with HMS Temeraire to secure an exemption if applicable.

■ **Outstanding Leave.**

While it is acknowledged

that the operational tempo of many units precludes some individuals from taking their Annual Leave Allowance (ALA), it is becoming increasingly common for the Career Managers to see excessive ALA balances, often from individuals who have completed consecutive shore assignments.

The additional pressures this places on some already very taut plots often have consequences for several individuals.

Frustratingly, it is often simply because an individual has not recorded their leave within JPA – please take your ALA where possible and ensure it is recorded in JPA.

If you have any questions regarding the above, then of course do not hesitate to contact your friendly neighbourhood Career Manager.

## NOTICEBOARD

### 1971 1981 1991 2001 THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

We flick back through the pages of *Navy News* to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...



● A Lynx helicopter from HMS Gloucester

### February 1971

EXTENSIVE floods in Malaysia prompted the Royal Navy to put recent experience in East Pakistan into use again.

Monsoons caused extensive flooding in the Temerloh region of Central Pahang. Malaysian authorities were informed by Royal Navy helicopter crews about 3,600 people who had not received food supplies for more than eight days.

Wessex helicopters from 847's Naval Air Squadron were used as crews flew over four times their usual duty hours in efforts to transport over several tons of food to badly affected areas.

Royal Marine manned Gemini RIBs were used to reach more isolated communities where the scale of the flood had been exacerbated by the river's increased speed.

### February 1981

NAVAL fliers plucked nine downed Dutch aviators out of the Atlantic when a Cold War mission went wrong.

The aircrew took to life-rafts after their aircraft ditched shadowing the Soviet aircraft carrier Kiev.

Two Sea King helicopters were sent from HMS Gannet to pick up the men who had been forced to abandon their aircraft in the Atlantic.

Poor weather conditions made the rescue all that much harder, with 30 knot winds, snow showers and a 30ft swell. Waves continually crashed over the life-rafts.

The nine surviving aircrew were winched up, eight by one helicopter and the last by the second Sea King. The bodies of two other crew members were later recovered by an RAF helicopter.

### February 1991

NAVAL LYNX along with US forces destroyed Iraqi anti-aircraft batteries in the opening blows of the first Gulf War.

The helicopters from ships HMS Cardiff and Gloucester were sent with US units to eliminate the guns on oil platforms off the coast of Kuwait. The operation was completed successfully and resulted in the first prisoners of war being taken, when 12 Iraqis were captured while attempting to defend the batteries.

### February 2001

ALTHOUGH the men of 45 Commando would have liked to have been at home for Christmas, celebrations were still held in Kosovo, culminating with a Royal Marines Band charity concert which took place in the centre of Pristina.

45 Cdo were nearing the end of a six-month tour which had seen large amounts of illegally-held weapons being confiscated and a number of smugglers arrested, amid the ever-present threat from ethnic-Albanian extremists.

The Christmas celebrations and handing out gifts to children were spread from Christmas Eve to Boxing Day to ensure that the momentum of ongoing operational commitments was fully maintained.

## Honours

**Appointments to the Military Division of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath**

*As Companions*  
Rear Admiral Amjad Mazhar Hussain  
Rear Admiral Robert Thomas Love

**Appointments to the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire**

*As Knight Commander*  
Vice Admiral Richard Jeffery Ibbotson DSC

*As Commanders*  
Cdre Michael Peter Mansergh  
Cdre Christopher Michael Howard Steel

*As Officers*  
Cdr James Stephen Donnelly  
Cdre David John Evans  
Cdr David John Faulks  
Cdr Stuart Brian Furness  
Capt Anthony Paul Holberry  
Capt Timothy Frederick Wilkins Martin

*As Members*  
Cdr Andrew Carnegie Stewart

*As Members*  
Lt Cdr Stephen Edward Adamson  
Lt Cdr Reginald Paul William Bell

*As Members*  
Lt Cdr Andrew Patrick Clarke  
Capt Robert Nigel Ginn Royal Marines

*As Members*  
Maj Mark John Hardie Royal Marines

*As Members*  
Lt Cdr Richard Simon Harrison  
Lt Cdr Anthony William Jervis Jenks

*As Members*  
WO2 John Stuart Jones Royal Marines

*As Members*  
WO1 Alistair McGill QGM Royal Marines

*As Members*  
Lt Cdr Jack Rickard  
CPO(Diver) William Sharp  
WO1 Ronald Sinclair Royal Marines

*As Members*  
Lt Cdr Rachel Smallwood  
C/Sgt Laird Webster Royal Marines

**Associate of the Royal Red Cross**  
CPO NN Louise Stephanie Speller

## Assignments

Rear Admiral Ian Corder to be Commander Operations and Rear Admiral Submarines as Head of Fighting Arm on March 8 2011.

Maj Paul Renshaw to 10 Training Squadron, 1 Assault Group Royal Marines, as officer commanding from April 26 2011.

## Competition

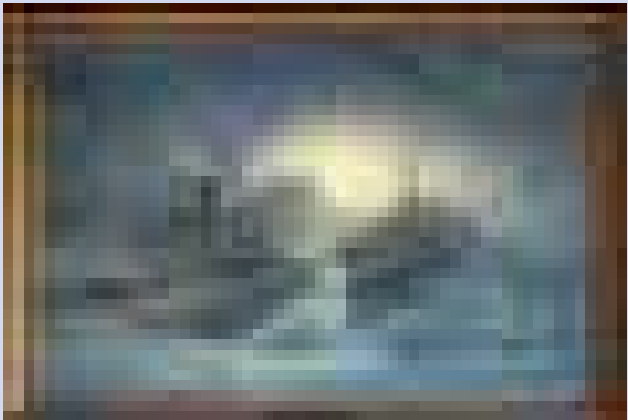
*Apocalypse Now* competition that appeared in our December 2010 issue. Five copies to be given away.

Winning answer: Francis Ford Coppola.  
Winners are: Paul Yates, Eccleshall, Stafford; David Axford, Haslemere, Surrey; Sid Myers, Plymouth, Devon; Mr N Anderson, Southsea, Hants; Mrs A Yates, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton.



# NOTICEBOARD

# Trophy lives



IN February 1940 the cruiser HMS Arethusa and the 4th Destroyer Flotilla – the latter under the command of Captain Philip Vian – were off the Norwegian coast searching for enemy merchant ships – their particular target being the supply ship Altmark.

Altmark had supported the pocket battleship Admiral Graf Spee during her raiding cruise in the Atlantic following the outbreak of World War 2, during which she had sunk nine British ships without the loss of any of their crews.

Her captain, Hans Langsdorff, had transferred the captured British seamen to Altmark which, after the loss of the Graf Spee following the Battle of the River Plate, headed back towards Germany.

When Arethusa sighted Altmark two Norwegian torpedo boats managed to frustrate all attempts by the British to board the German ship – Norway at this time still being neutral.

The Norwegians did search Altmark three times on February 15, but not thoroughly, and the German crew ran winches and other machinery to drown out the noise being made by the British captives; Altmark eventually tried to escape by entering Jøssingfjord later that day.

The following day Capt Vian, in the Tribal-class destroyer HMS Cossack also entered the fjord but his attempts to close Altmark were blocked by the Norwegians.

Having reported his difficulties he later received direct orders from the then First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill, which read: “Unless Norwegian torpedo-boat undertakes to convoy

Altmark to Bergen with a joint Anglo-Norwegian guard on board, and a joint escort, you should board Altmark, liberate the prisoners, and take possession of the ship pending further instructions.

“If Norwegian torpedo-boat interferes, you should warn her to stand off.

“If she fires upon you, you should not reply unless attack is serious, in which case you should defend yourself, using no more force than is necessary, and ceasing fire when she desists.”

In trying to avoid capture Altmark ran aground and at 10.20pm that evening Cossack’s boarding party launched their attack.

Serious hand-to-hand fighting took place including the use of bayonets and – for the last time in the Royal Navy – cutlasses which led to eight Germans being wounded and six killed.

On searching the holds and getting a positive reply to an enquiry as to whether any British seaman were below, the prisoners were informed that “The Navy’s here!”

The successful release of the 299 prisoners resulted in the Norwegian Government protesting to London about its neutrality having been violated and the Germans using the incident as an excuse for their subsequent successful invasion of Norway.

Capt Vian landed the rescued prisoners at Leith the following day and subsequently was awarded the Distinguished Service Order.

His successful attack on the Altmark is depicted in **Trophy 18449**, an oil painting by the renowned marine artist Norman Wilkinson.

## Deaths

Capt ‘DJ’ Scott-Masson. First served in Canberra in 1964 as Chief Officer and was subsequently Staff Captain before two spells in command. He had attended the maritime tactical course at Woolwich and the senior officers’ war course at Greenwich. In 1982 he was in command of the P&O liner Canberra on the final leg of a world cruise when he received a cryptic message to rendezvous with a small launch in Gibraltar, a port not on the itinerary, to embark a group of men who briefed him about an “interesting assignment” (the Argentines had seized the Falkland Islands the day before). As a result of this meeting a few days later in Southampton he was supervising the work which would fit Canberra for war; she was integrated into the British Task Force and on May 21 entered San Carlos Bay (Bomb Alley) where over 2,000 men were disembarked. Next he was ordered to rendezvous with Cunard’s QE2, which had been requisitioned as a troopship and 3,000 Guards, Gurkhas and Royals were transferred to Canberra in a day. He was awarded the CBE and made ADC to the Queen. November 16. Aged 81.

Surgeon Lt Cdr Bruce Cooper. At the outbreak of war he volunteered for the RNVF. His first ship was Versatile on Atlantic convoy duties. While escorting Hereward and carrying Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands (who was being evacuated to England), Versatile was bombed, whilst being towed he crawled into the bowels of the ship to treat the wounded by the light of emergency lanterns; he was mentioned in despatches. Quickly repaired she sailed two weeks later and he found himself treating the survivors of the Q-ship Prunella that had been torpedoed off Ushant; the survivors had been at sea in a lifeboat for six days. In 1941 he was recruited and trained for Operation Tracer, a stay-behind mission which was to be put into action in the event of Gibraltar being captured by the Axis Powers, however, the operation was called off once the threat had passed. At the end of the war he left the service but in 1977 took partial retirement to return to sea joining P&O as ship’s doctor in the school ship Uganda. In April 1982 Uganda was taken up from trade as a hospital ship for the Falklands conflict and at the age of 67 he went with her. December 3. Aged 96.

Lt Norman Herbert ‘Banjo’ West. Served 1948-82 at Ganges and in Mauritius, Coquette, Loch Ruthven, Torquay, Caunton, Ulysses, Virago, Cassandra, Verulam, Berwick and Lowestoft, also Victory, Vernon/ Osprey, St Vincent and Excellent. Member of the Ganges, Cassandra, Algerines, St Vincent, Ton Class and China Chat 8th Destroyer associations. December 23. Aged 77.

Lt Colin White DSC. Recruited in New Zealand for the FAA 1939 and sailed for the UK the following year; after going solo in eight hours at Emdon was sent to Canada for advanced training. After deck take-offs and landings on Furious and further torpedo and weapons training he was posted to 828 NAS in Malta which, because of severe losses, was combined with 830 NAS in 1942 to form the Naval Air Squadron Malta. From Hal Far airfield in the Fairey Albacore, he took part in torpedo attacks on German shipping and intruder sorties against Axis airfields with the RAF, and was awarded the DSC. After contracting jaundice, he was invalided back to the UK in 1943. Recovered, he returned as an instructor before being granted home leave. Back in the UK in 1944 he was posted to the School of Naval Warfare at St Merryn, Cornwall, as Ground Attack Instructor then to the elite Empire Test Pilots School. Demobilised in 1946 he returned to New Zealand. November 23. Aged 90.

Lt Noel Cashford RNVF. As a boy he was an active member of the Navy League’s Sea Cadet Corps and in 1941 joined the RN as an Ordinary Seaman and was drafted to Pembroke, Chatham. After an initial period at sea, he was recommended for officer training subsequently passing out at Royal Naval College in Greenwich he was commissioned as a S/Lt RNVF (Special Duties) and joined a relatively small band of officers trained at Vernon, Firework and Volcano to render safe unexploded bombs, sea mines and any other unexploded devices. He dealt with over 200 and was appointed an MBE in 1946 for “courage and zeal in bomb and mine disposal operations in the Dover Sub-Command”. Demobilised in 1947, he remained a member of the Supplementary Reserve and was attached for a short period to Wessex at Southampton. In recent years he has written several books about the EOD exploits of Service personnel. Further information can be found on pages 30-31. Mine Warfare and Clearance Diving Officers’ Association. January 15. Aged 88.

Ron Baldwin. CPO SPT1. Last ship was Eagle. Chairman of Nore Command PT Branch Association. Aged 84.

Ronald ‘Ron’ Ernest James Harris. PO Stoker. Served 1944-47 in BYMS 2277, ML 583, ML 585 and Taransay. Royal Naval Patrol Service Association. December 11. Aged 83.

John Empson. Chairman of the Southern branch HMS Illustrious Association for some time and also a National Committee member. November 4.

Peter James Parry also known as Pete and Blondie. Sonar & Asdic Operator. Joined as a Boy in 1942 served at Ganges 1943. Volunteered for submarines his favourite was Unseen; was recalled to ‘standby’ Afrayr when she was in-build. November 26. Aged 85.

Roy Savage. Able Seaman. Served in Morecambe Bay and ‘Farnols Foot’ (Korean War 1952). HMS Morecambe Bay Association. December 5. Aged 79.

William John ‘Sharky’ Ward. Naval Airman AH3(D). Served 1960-69; upon release re-joined as an RO3 1969-71. Served in Victorious and Eagle also Naval Air Stations Condor, Sanderling, Seahawk and Goldcrest; also Mercury. Aircraft Handlers Association. November. Aged 69.

Anthony ‘Jed’ Hoare. Leading Airman AH2. Served 1961-70 on release enrolled in Lee Division RFR until 1973. Served in Hermes, Victorious and Albion also Naval Air Stations Seahawk, Osprey, Goldcrest, Fulmar, Daedalus and Condor. The Aircraft Handlers Association. November. Aged 67.

R Johnson. Served LCP(R) Strathnaver and LCT 735. Middletonborough LST & Landing Craft Association. December 26.

Peter Baker. Served in LST 3033, Fly, Glory, Norfolk, St Austell Bay, Superb and Wiay. Holyhead LST & Landing Craft Association. January 1. Aged 82.

Graham Akeroyd. AB RP2. Served 1966-74 in Blackwood, Bulwark, Hecla and Diomedé. January 3. Aged 60.

Boyd ‘Mac’ McGeoch. L/AM(E). Served 1943-46 joining Lee-on-Solent Pert Division. Branch representative of Birmingham FAA Association. November 28. Aged 88.

Robert ‘Bob’ Blanchard. Leading NA(O). Served 1952-64; last ship was Ark Royal 1962-64. FAA Armourers Association. December 17. Aged 76.

Thomas Henry ‘Harry’ Ward DSM. PO Cook. Served 1939-48. Awarded DSM 1940 in Gossamer for saving an officer’s life at Dunkirk (Operation Dynamo); survived the sinking of Leda on Russian convoy PQ14. Also served in Pembroke (Medway Queen), Relentless, High Flyer, Mayina, Ocean, St Austell Bay, LST 3516, Striker, Brissenden and Ausania. January 8. Aged 90.

Tom Heckels. Sto/Mech. Served in Anson, Zenith and HIMAS Sydney. RN Engineerroom Association. November 26. Aged 81.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION  
Robin Reginald ‘Ginge’ Gooding also known as ‘Bob’. M(E)1. Served 1957-66 in Loch Fyne (57-59), Ark Royal (59-60) and submarines Truncheon (61-63) and Ambush (63-66); discharged in Townsville, Australia. Nottingham RNA; and also the Mansfield branch of the Submariners Association. November 16. Aged 71.

George Wilson. AB. Served 1948-56 in King George V and Anson. Wigston & District branch committee member and long time welfare officer. November 26. Aged 79.

Gladys Rudd. WRAF. Served in the RAF. Associate member of Wigston & District branch. November 5.

Don William Hughes. CPO Aircraft Fitter. Joined FAA 1948 and left RN 1970. Last ships Ark Royal (1961) and Hermes (1968). Life member Llandudno RNA and member of FAA Association. November 23. Aged 80.

Edward ‘Little Eddie’ Mosling. Served from 1942 for the duration of World War 2 in ships Hood and Howe including time with the British Pacific Fleet combating the Japanese invasions of the Pacific Islands. Lymington & District RNA. December 6. Aged 86.

Gerald ‘Gerry’ Down. Stoker. Served World War 2 mainly in Jamaica following latterly as Ship Engineer in the Merchant Fleet. Previous member of Greenford RNA then later upon moving to the New Forest, Lymington & District branch; also HMS Jamaica Association. December 15. Aged 83.

John Scott. Served with 16th/5th Lancers. Associate Wetherby branch. December 2. Aged 81.

Donald Stanley ‘Nobby’ Clark. Served 1944-47 in Triumph. Cheshunt branch. November. Aged 84.

Margaret Josephine ‘Bunty’ Lawrie (née) Thorpe. WREN. Served 1949-53 at HMS Dauntless, Mercury, Harrier, Osiris and Nuthatch. Transferred to Littlehampton branch 1997 from Bognor. January 3. Aged 79.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION  
W ‘Bill’ Cheshire. L/Sto. Served on submarines 1942-46 in H34, Ultimatum and Solent. Merseyside branch. Aged 87.  
G ‘Gordon’ Faithfull. AB AA3. Served on submarines 1943-46 in Sibyl, Sirmoon, Stoic and Spur. Medway Towns branch. Aged 86.  
R J ‘Ralph’ Hemsey. AB UC3. Served in submarines 1950-54 in Artemis, Taciturn and Selene. Australia branch. Aged 81.

I A ‘Iain’ Nethercott DSM. PO LTO. Served on submarines 1942-47 aboard Otway, H43, Tactician, Upstart, Spirit and Selene. Essex branch. Aged 89.  
C ‘Cliff’ Summerhayes. Telegraphist. Served on submarines 1941-47 aboard L27, Otway, P555, Surf, Talent, Totem and Tally-Ho. Essex branch. Aged 88.

Capt D C R ‘David’ Walters. Served on submarines 1942-54 in P555, Ultimatum, Spur, Alderney, Seascout, Alaric and Aeneas. Colchester branch. Aged 89.

M E ‘Mike’ Williams. ME1. Served on submarines 1958-63 in Taciturn, Tactician and Alaric. Beds & Herts branch. Aged 74.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION  
Norman West. AB. Served in Coquette. December 23. Aged 77.

Alexander Ball DSM. CERA. Served in Serene and Fantome. December 25. Aged 91.

Jim Huxtable. Sto 1. Served in Circe and Fort York. December 26. Aged 84.

Stan Woolley. AB. Served in Rinaldo. December 29. Aged 84.

John Morton. Sto. 1. Served in Marmion. January 1. Aged 85.

David Hutchins. REM 1. Served in Rowena. January 9. Aged 79.

HMS UNICORN ASSOCIATION  
Don Taffy Andrews. L/Stoker. Served on board 1943-46. November 5. Aged 88.  
Arnold ‘Gash’ Binns. AB FD QM. Served on board 1943-46 Mess 20. December 26. Aged 88.

Lt Cdr Michael John de Courcy Carey. Joined RNC Dartmouth 1930 then as a Cadet 1933-34 in Frobbisher. A Midshipman in Valiant, Ramillies, Glowworm and Royal Sovereign and acting sub-lieutenant RNC Greenwich and Portsmouth. S/Lt and Lt in ships Daring (China Station), Valorous (East coast convoys), London, Unicorn 1942-45 and Beachy Head. Lt Cdr RNAS Anthem, Swiftsure, Protector, Switha, Phoenix, FO Gibraltar (dealing with Suez shipping) and Vanguard (in charge of ships in reserve). January 6. Aged 94.

## Sports lottery

December 11 2010: VW Polo – AB1 J Pole; £1,500 – AB2 D L Storey; £500 – AB1 T P Stynes.

December 18 2010: £5,000 – AB1 L J Broomfield; £1,500 – Mne A L Drinkwater; £500 – PO B J Palombella.

December 25 2010: £5,000 – Mne A M Stone; £1,500 – AB B Elliott; £500 – AB P A Richardson.

January 1 2011: £5,000 – S/Lt J Evans; £1,500 – WO2 G B Langworthy; £500 – Mne J A Zsibrita.

January 8 2011: £5,000 – LWtr R J Hewitt; £1,500 – LH N Rusden; £500 – C/ Sgt A R Stephens.

January 15 2011: £5,000 – LH M T Meehan; £1,500 – Mne J S Jones; £500 – AB1 M L Hardy.

## Reunions

MARCH 2011  
HMS Diana Association: The March 4-6 reunion at Blackpool will not be holding an AGM as stated in the January edition. Sorry for any confusion. The AGM will be held at Torquay in October 2011; further details to follow. Our association is made up from shipmates off all commissions, so if there is anyone out there who is an ex HMS Diana matelot, and would like to come along and join us and hopefully meet up with your old oppos, please ring the hotel 01253 620081 and book a room. For further details please contact J.Fisher at johnjackie.fisher@talktalk.net or tel: 01530 242850.

RN Communications Association: AGM and annual dinner will take place on March 11 and 12 in Manchester. For more details contact the Secretary Carl Beeson at carl@summerskills.co.uk or tel: 01752 481283 (Work) or 01752 253746 (Home).

HMS Victorious/Hermes, SRs and Bakery Chefs 1967 to 1970: We are planning a get together from March 25 to 26 in Portsmouth. For further information contact Hubert Enright at scouseenright@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 07884 040041.

848 NAS Malaysia Association: Squadron members of the 1952-56 ‘Malayan Emergency’ formation meet in Bromsgrove on March 26. Contact Les Smith on 01584 711910.

RNXS (East Anglia) Group: 17th annual reunion will take place at the Shipwreck, Shotley Marina (ex HMS Ganges, Enright Block) on March 27 from 1200 to 1430. Further details from Peter Brooke on 01473 310189 or 7 Penn Close, Capel St Mary, Ipswich IP9 2UE.

APRIL 2011  
HMS Peacock Association: Reunion, AGM and lunch at the Royal Naval Club, Royal Leamington Spa on April 23 at 1200. Entertainment and buffet from 1900. All enquiries to Dave Pearson, 12 Ashridge Rise, Berkhamstead, Herts, HP4 3JT or tel: 01442 862274.

HMS Harrier, RNADC and Met Branch: Exhibition, April 30 to May 3, in the Coronation Hall, Dale. There is a Commemoration Service in Dale Church, April 30 at 2.30pm to mark the 50th anniversary of the closing of HMS Harrier, Kete. For further details, please contact Margaret Copley, Coastlands Local History Group on 01646 636295.

MAY 2011  
HMS Gambia Association: Mini reunion at Market Bosworth from May 6 to 8. Contact John Andrews, Social Secretary at babjo2@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 01970 627811.

HMS Opossum Association: 18th reunion will be held at Lindum Hotel, St Annes-on-Sea, Lancashire from May 13 to 16. All Opossums from the ships five commissions 1945-58 and their wives/partners are most welcome. Contact Eddie Summerford at 28 Greyton Road, Limefield, Bury, Lancs. BL9 6PN or tel: 0161 764 6778.  
HMS Leeds Castle First Crew Reunion takes place at the Liner Hotel, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool, L3 5QB from May 27 to 29. Guests/partners are welcome. For more information contact Mark Winn at markwinn@ntlworld.com or tel: 07977 962641.

JUNE 2011  
HMS Ganges, 14 Recruitment, 1958: A reunion for the boys who joined HMS Ganges on June 10, 1958 and lived in Grenville 23 Mess, will take place at Chatham on June 10. Anyone who lived in that mess at the time is very welcome to attend. Please contact

## Ask Jack

Oscar the cat: A while ago I purchased a second-hand book, *Pursuit: The sinking of the Bismarck* by Ludovick Kennedy. Under the cover was a hand written note about ‘Oscar’. He was the ship’s cat on the Bismarck and when it was sunk, he escaped clinging with all claws to a piece of wreckage. He was spotted by the crew of HMS Cossack which was also a casualty of war. This time he was picked up by Ark Royal which was also sunk. Some of the sailors risked their lives to save him and he eventually was landed and spent an honourable retirement at the Belfast Home for Sailors. I am intrigued to find out more about Oscar and the sailors home in Belfast. If you can remember Oscar or have any information at all please contact Mrs D Miller on 020 8997 5670.

The Laughing Sailors Cookery Book: David ‘Rowdy’ Yates, the author of *Bomb Alley*, is trying to locate an old Pusser’s metal platter (food tray) to use when photographing dishes for his forthcoming collection of traditional naval dishes. As well as taking the reader on a light-hearted voyage through his entire naval career (an SA in 1976 to a WOCA in 2000), the book will contain 16 classic slosher’s creations. If you have a Pusser’s platter for loan or sale, please contact Rowdy on 07718 685936.

HMS Stronghold: I was a Ganges boy serving from 1961 to 1972 in Russell, Decoy, Yarmouth, Tartar, Victory and Triumph. Years after leaving the Navy, I found out that I had lost an uncle, George Richard Lewis, onboard HMS Stronghold. She had been attacked and sunk by a Japanese task group consisting of the heavy cruiser Maya and the destroyers Arashi and Nowaki off Java on March 2, 1942. I would be interested to know if there is an Old Comrades Association or an ‘S’ Type Destroyer Association. Contact Brian Lewis, 43 Porth-y-Castell, Barry, Glamorgan CF62 6QB or tel: 01446 736874.

Bill Rosewell at billrosewell@btinternet.com or tel: 01884 841901. A super reunion was held in London last year with three wives also present.

HMS Liverpool Association: The 28th reunion takes place on June 11 at the Glis Association, Whale Island, mustering at 1200. Our association is made up of those who served on the cruiser and the Type 42 destroyer and new members are always welcome. For more information and membership details contact John Parker at j.parker51@btinternet.com or tel: 023 9252 1222.

HMS Hecla Gulf Deployment (1990): A reunion is being planned for June 17 to 19. So that I can get an idea of numbers interested, please contact Colin Bodenham at c bodz@sky.com or tel: 07955 669393 or you can search Facebook for HMS Hecla Reunion.

JULY 2011  
D-Boats Association: Annual reunion will take place in the WO, SR & SNCOs Mess, HMS Nelson on July 2 and 3. The salute will be taken by a CO from one of the new type 45s. After the march past, tot time and lunch in the mess with invited guests. Further details on the reunion or how to join the association can be obtained from Mike Smith at dboats@tiscali.co.uk or see the website at http://www.d-boats.co.uk or tel: 01553 765530 or write to 206 Main Road, Clenchwarton, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE34 4AA.

SEPTEMBER 2011  
HMS Invincible Communications Association (Falklands) 82: Annual reunion to be held in Bournemouth from September 23 to 25. For details contact Tim Jenkins at g0nz0bign0se@aol.com or tel: 07753 766875 or see the website at http://www.freewebs.com/hica82

HMS Sheffield Association: 28th Annual reunion takes place at Tillington Hall Hotel, Stafford, from September 30 to October 3. All shipmates from the C24 cruiser, D80 destroyer and F96 frigate will be made welcome including any new shipmates who wish to join the association. For further details please contact Aleck Boswell on 01455 202342 or the Isle of Wight Tours for hotel bookings on 01983 405116.

OCTOBER 2011  
HMS Alert 1961-63 Commission: The next reunion muster which will be the 50th anniversary of the commission, will be held at 7.30pm on October 1 at The Angel Hotel, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. Enquiries to R Howard, 35 Seymour Rd, Lee on Solent, Hants, PO13 9EG or tel: 02392 799141.

HMS Ajax and RPVA: 46th annual reunion will be held at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, Kent from October 5 to 6. Open to all who served in the cruiser 1937-48 or frigate 1963-84 or are relatives of those who did so. For further details please contact Malcolm Collis, Glenmorrag, Little Coxwell, Farinford, Oxfordshire SN7 7LW or email malcolm.collis@googlemail.com or tel 01367 240382.

HMS Tartar Association: Hold their 8th reunion and AGM at the Red Lea Hotel, Scarborough from October 7 to 8. All former members of HMS Tartar F133 and her WW2 predecessor and their spouses are most welcome to join us for a great weekend. Numbers have increased at every reunion, so make the effort, you will be guaranteed a warm welcome. For further details please contact Keith Helliwell at k.helliwell@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 07902 716011.

FAA Safety Equipment & Survival Association: Reunion to be held from October 14 to 16 at Bosworth Hall Hotel, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire. Please contact Secretary Gordon ‘Pixie’ Parkes at gordon.parkes@virginmedia.com or tel: 01726 825283.

HMS Morecambe Bay Association: Reunion at Torquay from October 14 to 16. All Bay-class frigate men are welcome. Contact Doug Turk at doug.turk@ntlworld.com or tel: 01252 378629.

822 Royal Marine Recruit Squad: A 4th reunion for the Squad (formed January 1965) is planned for October 21 to 23. It is to be held at the Barcelo Imperial Hotel, Blackpool. At present there are 17 squad members ‘signed up’ including 12 who are attending with there respective spouses. Are there any more ‘822ers’ out there? If so contact Bill Wood at wjw1947@sky.com or tel: 01772 617679.

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Royal Navy recruitment: 0845 607 5555, [www.royalnavy.mod.uk](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk)

Veterans Agency: 0800 169 2277, [www.veterans-uk.info](http://www.veterans-uk.info)

RN and RM Service records: 01283 227912, [navysearhprc@tnt.co.uk](mailto:navysearhprc@tnt.co.uk)

RN Learning Centres: Nelson 9380 25292; Drake 9375 67885; Clyde 93255 5971

Royal Naval Association: 023 9272 3823, [www.royal-naval-association.co.uk](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk)

Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity: 023 9254 8076, [www.rnrmc.org.uk](http://www.rnrmc.org.uk)

RNBT: 023 9269 0112 (general), 023 9266 0296 (grants), [www.rnbt.org.uk](http://www.rnbt.org.uk)

British Legion: 08457 725725, [www.britishtlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishtlegion.org.uk)

Naval Families Federation: 023 9265 4374, [www.nff.org.uk](http://www.nff.org.uk)

Seafarers UK: 020 7932 0000, [www.seafarers-uk.org](http://www.seafarers-uk.org)

SSAFA Forces Help: 0845 1300 975, [www.ssaafa.org.uk](http://www.ssaafa.org.uk)

Medals enquiries: 0800 085 3600

Royal Naval Museum: 023 9272 7562, [www.royalnavalmuseum.org](http://www.royalnavalmuseum.org)

Fleet Air Arm Museum: 01935 840565, [www.fleetairarm.com](http://www.fleetairarm.com)

Royal Marines Museum: 023 9281 9385, [www.royalmarinesmuseum.co.uk](http://www.royalmarinesmuseum.co.uk)

RN Submarine Museum: 023 9252 9217, [www.rnsubmus.co.uk](http://www.rnsubmus.co.uk)

National Maritime Museum: 020 8312 6565, [www.nmm.ac.uk](http://www.nmm.ac.uk)

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## Donations welcomed by Buxton

BUXTON unit was delighted to receive donations of two items of equipment which have vastly improved their training capabilities.

Charles Kitchen, president of Buxton and District Lions Club, and Nick Townsend, chairman of their Charity Committee, presented the unit with an overhead projector, while Andrew Naden, director of AJ Naden Haulage Ltd, presented a laptop computer.

The combination of the projector and the laptop enables staff to give PowerPoint presentations to groups of cadets, and senior cadets can learn how to create and deliver PowerPoint presentations themselves.

As the unit carries out Royal Yachting Association training for Sea Cadets and for Errwood Sailing Club, it can now use DVDs which demonstrate a variety of skills.

The donors of the equipment were able to see it in use by enthusiastic cadets and were impressed with the results.

Buxton unit has also expressed its thanks to all the people who supported them in a bag pack at Morrisons, which raised £690, and in 'Community Matters' at Waitrose, which will result in a donation of £321.

## Frigate offers sea-time for RM cadets

SIX members of the Lympstone Detachment of the Royal Marines Volunteer Cadet Corps recently experienced the open sea aboard HMS Campbeltown.

Meeting the frigate in Holyhead, North Wales, the cadets had a fun-packed programme, visiting many areas of the ship.

Hosted on board by Cdr Keri Harris, they were shown the engine rooms, participated in some first aid training, were given a comprehensive brief by 206 Flight, who were embarked with their Lynx, and were allowed to drive the ship – under the close direction of the Quartermaster and the Officer of the Watch.

There were two elements of the visit which the cadets would class as their highlight; one was firing a general purpose machine gun from the flight deck, and the other was being invited to have dinner with the Captain in his personal quarters.

HMS Campbeltown is to be decommissioned this year, so this was a real opportunity for the cadets to see life aboard a warship.

## Poppy cash handed over

REPRESENTATIVES from Whitehaven unit were able to provide a cash boost of over £350 to the Poppy Appeal at the Kells, Whitehaven branch of the Royal British Legion.

The money was raised through a concert by the Royal Marines Band Scotland, held in the town's Civic Hall.

Speaking at the presentation the unit's vice chairman, David Abbott, said that it was a great pleasure for the Sea Cadets to make the donation to the appeal.

"We are honouring a promise we made that we would share the concert proceeds with the Legion," he said.

"It is a very great pleasure for us to be able to give a little bit back to our community, which has supported us so generously for many years."

The cheque was presented to Bill Mawson, chairman of the Kells Branch of the Legion, and secretary Alan Barnes by CPO (SCC) Maureen McEuan.



● Members of Bristol Avonmouth unit perform a hornpipe amidst the snow – real and fake – at the Victorian Festival of Christmas in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

# A burst of publicity for frozen hornpipes

BRISTOL Avonmouth cadets kept the cold at bay with vigorous displays of the hornpipe at a festival in Portsmouth.

And their efforts, at the Historic Dockyard's Victorian Festival of Christmas, put the youngsters in the spotlight as almost 30,000 visitors turned up to enjoy traditional festive attractions.

The cadets of TS Enterprise were invited to bring their Hornpipe Display Team and a party of cadets to demonstrate the traditional form of naval exercise and entertainment.

They performed two displays in the main entertainment arena and a further eight displays up and down the 'Main Road'.

And whereas in previous years the event has relied on snow machines for a wintry appearance, this time there was real snow falling as the cadets showed off their skills.

AC Siobhan McAnaspie said: "It was really cold but the dancing kept you warm and the snow gave everything a real Christmas feel."

POC Ollie Hillier added: "It

was amazing the interest shown by the visitors.

"I don't think that I have ever been photographed so much in my life."

In between displays cadets and staff were able to visit permanent displays at the dockyard, including HMS Victory, Action Stations and Father Christmas' grotto on board HMS Warrior 1860.

The party was also given a tour of one of the Royal Navy's newest ships, Type 45 destroyer HMS Dauntless.

Avonmouth's Commanding Officer, Lt (SCC) Barbara Hiller RNR, said: "The cadets were, as always, brilliant and members of the public made numerous comments about the politeness and smartness of the cadets.

"Visits like this one are an excellent way of developing the confidence and interpersonal skills of our cadets in a fun and exciting environment.

"Many of our visits to sites like Portsmouth and London involve activities that you just could not do otherwise."

Lt Hiller continued: "We would like to thank the Commanding



● Bristol Avonmouth cadets with HMS Daring – sister ship of HMS Dauntless, which they visited – behind them

Officer and the ship's company of HMS Dauntless, Richmond Events Management, Terri at the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, our accommodation hosts and WO Bill Parr at ACACTO, without whose help the visit could not

have taken place.

"A big thank-you must go to TS Hornet, the Gosport Sea Cadets, who quickly obtained a spare CD of the hornpipe music when ours became U/S on the way to Portsmouth."



● AC Michael Carroll

## War poem strikes a chord

A CADET from Widnes unit was invited to recite a poem which he wrote on local radio in the North-West.

AC Michael Carroll's poem, The Last I Heard, portrays a soldier and his bride-to-be's perspective on war.

Michael gave the poem its first airing at the unit's annual inspection, but after the BBC obtained a copy they invited him to go into the studio to record an interview for the Roger Phillips Show on BBC Radio Merseyside, and to recite the poem himself.

On the day, Michael said: "You don't expect that someone from Widnes would get to be on the radio."

"It's a really nice surprise – and my mum is so excited!"

The Commanding Officer at TS Eskimo, Lt (SCC) Danny Yates RNR, said: "We're all really proud of Michael – this is such an achievement."

Michael's poem can be found on the Navy News website at [www.navynews.co.uk/letters/420-the-last-i-heard.aspx](http://www.navynews.co.uk/letters/420-the-last-i-heard.aspx)

## Corps supports Red Nose team

THE Sea Cadet Corps is teaming up with Comic Relief for Red Nose Day, Friday March 18.

The Red Nose Day team is working with youth groups across the UK, and is challenging every Sea Cadet unit to get involved.

To help units come up with good ideas there's a fundraising activity kit designed specifically for young people, available at [www.rednoseday.com/youthgroups](http://www.rednoseday.com/youthgroups)

To find out more about Sea Cadets teaming up with Comic Relief visit [www.sea-cadets.org/comicrelief.aspx](http://www.sea-cadets.org/comicrelief.aspx)

Comic Relief was launched at a refugee camp in Sudan on Christmas Day in 1985 with a simple objective – comedians would make people laugh while raising money for good causes at home and in Africa.

Red Nose Day arrived in 1988, raising £15m that year and starting a tradition that has since raised more than £450m in total



● The spruced-up Medway Towns unit minibus

## Smart set of wheels

THE Medway Towns unit minibus was donated by Chatham branch of the RNA and the RNBT in 2007, when it was already seven years old.

By 2010, after ten years service, the bus was beginning to look a little bit worn and drab.

But thanks to the Berkeley Group, they have a new spruced set of wheels following a full refresh of the livery, which tied

in with the new Sea Cadet branding.

Unit chairman Ian Spreadborough said: "It was good timing for us and we are very grateful to Berkeleys for their support."

"The Cadets always look the part, but we needed to smarten up our image when out and about in the community – and now heads turn wherever we go."



● ACs Maisy Welsman and Jasmine Walker with Santa and Lauran the Elf

STAFF and a handful of hardy cadets from Canonteign unit attended the recent Canonteign Falls Estate Winter Country Fair, during which Father Christmas made a surprise visit.

Assisted by Lauran the Elf and two senior cadets, Father Christmas fielded requests and shopping lists from his young visitors while other cadets performed car parking duties and helped out in the estate's restaurant.

Unlike the other Service cadets forces, each Sea Cadet unit is an individual charity affiliated to the Marine Society and Sea Cadets; the units receive no direct Government funding but are logistically supported by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, so the trustees rely on partnership support from the local community, schools and businesses to keep the units going.

The trustees' chairman Nicholas Maylam – who mysteriously disappeared just before Father Christmas turned up – said: "Without the help and support of local businesses like Canonteign Falls we would be unable to provide Sea Cadet activities throughout Teignbridge. "We are happy to support those who support us and help out at events like this."

Canonteign Sea Cadets are in the process of finalising a number of major community projects supported by both Teignmouth Community College and Teign School and local statutory bodies which will enhance their ability to provide marine training to the youth of Teignbridge.

In addition these projects will provide practical support to pupils attending both schools and the wider community.

If you are interested in finding out more, or in supporting the unit, please contact the unit chairman on 01626 879467 or the Officer in Charge, PO Julie Morrison, on 07590 994274.





● Pat Goucher

## East bids farewell to Pat

AN Eastern Area stalwart has retired after 31 years – and four years later than she could have done.

Patricia Goucher was also the longest-serving Marine Society and Sea Cadets MSSC staff member by six years.

Pat was with her husband, based at RAF Swinderby, when the job of part-time secretary came up.

She got the job and joined the Sea Cadets in RAF Swinderby on June 4 1979. A year later she became full-time secretary, and the rest is history.

When Pat joined the organisation, she worked on a manual typewriter; there was no such thing as a photocopier – all reproductions were done on a Gestetner duplicator – she used things like bottled Tipp-Ex to correct mistakes and all correspondence was conducted by phone or letter; very different to the instant communication of the world in which we now live.

Pat has seen a great many changes in her years and has 'trained' 12 Area officers.

She has also seen the Eastern Area HQ move on several occasions.

She started at RAF Swinderby in 1978, but the air station closed in 1983 so the HQ moved to RAF Scampton.

Scampton was earmarked for closure in 1997, and although the Corps was offered accommodation in Digby, the office went to a drill hall in Gainsborough.

After 12 years in the drill hall, the office is once again on the move, and Pat oversaw the set-up of the HQ in its new office at RAF Cranwell before Christmas.

Over the years Pat has thrown herself into her job and supported Sea Cadet events up and down the country.

She undertook several courses at weekends, was a great supporter of the Area regatta and used to help out when the Regatta was held in Ipswich.

Pat has been the tea lady for the past ten years, instrumental in ensuring all the staff workers tied to their posts running the event were fed and watered.

In 2004 Pat was awarded the MBE for her services to the Corps – though her extra voluntary work helped clinch the honour; she works tirelessly for the church and regularly on Sundays she is at the hospital supporting patients at the bedside.

Eastern Area dined Pat out to mark her retirement, with the Deputy Area Officer (East), Cdr S Watt, attending as guest speaker.

## Caterham in 7

CATERHAM was one of seven Surrey District units to take part in a parade at Guildford Cathedral to mark the 150th anniversary of the Cadet movement.

Eight cadets from TS Zephyr, plus two instructors were included in the two Guard divisions for the event, which were inspected by the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, Sarah Goad.

Lt (SCC) Barry Mitchell RNR, First Lieutenant of Camberley unit was the Colour Officer.

# Busy schedule for Navy Board cadet

LIFE as a Sea Cadet can be as busy and interesting as you want it to be.

There are plenty of opportunities to learn new skills, to compete at sports and to socialise at unit level.

And if you want to take it to another plane – literally, as well as figuratively-speaking – then let Annabel Broad be an example.

Annabel, a Petty Officer Cadet at Crewe unit, was last year's Navy Board Cadet for the North West – though the role was not on her radar until she was informed by the Area Officer that she could be a candidate.

Navy Board Cadets act as escorts for Navy Board members or other senior Royal Navy officers at appropriate official ceremonies or other such functions.

These would include royal visits, formal parades such as Remembrance Day and Trafalgar Day parades, presentations and awards, recruiting events, ship visits, opening ceremonies and cocktail parties.

Annabel's name duly went forward, and she got the job.

With it came a host of duties and experiences, such as:

■ Sailing around France and the Channel Islands;

■ Flying at RNAS Yeovilton;

■ Meeting the Prince of Wales and Earl of Wessex;

■ Meeting Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland, Rear Admiral Martin Alabaster, and sharing her views on the Corps with his;

■ Attending the launch of submarine HMS Ambush at Barrow.

Annabel, who is 18, has been a cadet for four years.

She is a keen sea kayaker – a skill in which she also instructs.

Annabel has passed her pre-selection course to be an officer in the Corps, and she also has an Admiralty Interview Board coming



● POC Annabel Broad (right) during the Sea Cadet aviation course phase two at RNAS Yeovilton. "We flew with 727 Squadron," said Annabel. "The man in the photo with me is Lt Jerry Tribe, who was second-in-command of 727 however has just retired. We spent a week there on our course and I achieved my silver wings and got one out of the three places for gold wings next year, which you have to be selected for. The course consisted of a navigation exercise, along with flying the plane and using the controls, talking to air traffic control and aerobatics. The photo was taken after I landed after my navigation exercise."

up in order to pursue her ambition to become a warfare officer.

And Annabel does have a life outside the Corps as well – she has just finished A-levels at college, being named student of the year, and does voluntary work teaching disabled children.

"One of the events I enjoyed the most was attending the Mountbatten Festival at the Royal Albert Hall and meeting the First Sea Lord," said Annabel.

"The concert alone was outstanding, but to meet the First Sea Lord and other admirals was

a fantastic experience.

"I am very grateful for the award and the opportunities it has given me, along with great friendship of my fellow Navy Board Cadets.

"The only thing I would like to see improved is the awareness of the award, as many cadets didn't know what the award was – it is a fairly new award and the opportunities that it gives are too good to miss.

"I can honestly say that I have had one of the most exciting and busiest years in 2010.

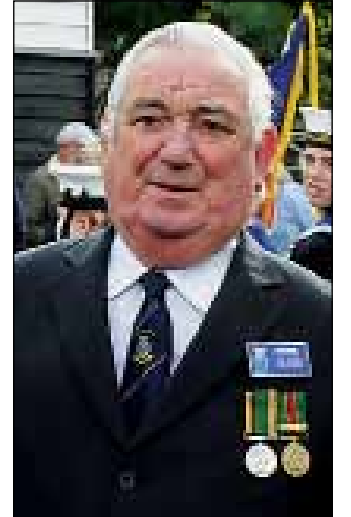
"I had the opportunity to go to

Buckingham Palace to meet Prince Charles and Prince Edward, which was amazing.

"It was lovely that my mum was invited as well to share my achievement and excitement."

Annabel's successor as Navy Board Cadet for the North West Area for 2011 is 17-year-old Cdt Sgt Chris Warren, from Fleetwood unit's Royal Marines Cadet detachment.

Chris, a motorcycle engineering student at Blackpool and the Fylde College, hopes to join the Army's Royal Military Police.



● Lt Cdr (SCC) Don Davies RNR

## Officer's sterling service rewarded

A SEA Cadet stalwart has been awarded an MBE in the 2011 New Year's Honours Civil List for services to the Sea Cadets over a 35-year career.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Don Davies RNR Rtd joined as a Civilian Instructor in 1975, and during his time with the Sea Cadets, he has held almost every unit post there is, from Petty Officer Instructor to commanding officer and chairman – the latter at Dartford (TS Anson) and New Romney (TS Veteran).

He also had a distinguished career in the London Ambulance Service, particularly during the IRA bombings in the mid-70s and 80s, receiving several citations from the Royal Humane Society.

Don stood down as chairman of Dartford in 2002 and moved to New Romney for a restful retirement, but within months of settling in was getting involved with the local unit, and became Chairman within four months.

At the time TS Veteran was struggling to stay open and the unit was quite run down.

Don, along with his wife Hazel who became secretary, recruited new volunteers and started the rebuilding process.

Modest as ever Don paid tribute to the fellow volunteers and colleagues who have helped him to achieve what he has, and in particular thanked his wife Hazel for her unstinting support and patience.

Sea Cadets Area Chairman (South) Ivor Riddell said: "Don is the epitome of the service ethos that runs through our volunteer cadre within the Sea Cadet organisation and is fully deserving of this prestigious recognition."

"He has achieved all he has despite having serious health problems and many other challenges, and he continues to give his all in support of the young people in his community."



● Stonehaven members and their guests, the Rev David Stewart and Douglas Knox, at the unit's Cadet Mess Dinner

## RN customs direct mess dinner

STONEHAVEN and District unit held their annual Cadet Mess Dinner at their High Street headquarters.

The cadets were joined by the President of the Stonehaven Rotary Club, Douglas Knox, unit chaplain Rev David Stewart and their own Mess President, POC Michael Smith, and Vice President, LC Michael Blacklaw.

The dinner followed the high standards of a traditional Royal Navy officers' mess dinner.

Guests and cadets were dressed in formal attire, were called to dinner by the buglers and were piped on board.

Grace was said by the chaplain, then everyone got stuck into a three-course meal followed by teas,

coffees and (non-alcoholic) port, which was passed around the table as custom dictated.

There was also a toast to the Queen, followed by a musical presentation by the unit bagpiper, OC Marcus Coolahan.

The formal part of the evening was rounded off by speeches from the main guests.

The dinner was organised by the Parents and Supporters Association, where the unit staff serve the cadets to give them a well-earned thanks for all their commitment, efforts and achievements during yet another very successful year for TS Carron.

During the course of the evening LC Heather Lawman was presented with her Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award by Douglas Knox.

## Beccles is best

BECCLES unit can now boast the title of best training organisation for 2010 in Eastern Area, awarded at the Area Sea Cadet conference held at Bishop Grossette College in Lincoln.

The training team at the unit comprises 13 members of adult staff, although special mention has to go to the unit's Training Officer, PO (SCC) Tony Easter, for all his hard work in making sure the cadets receive a wide variety of training both on and off the water.

Activities sampled by the cadets over the past year have included canoeing, sailing, the BTEC in Public Services, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, St John Ambulance first Aid, camping, chartwork, communications and much more.

## Maritime past is celebrated

TWO cadets from Southwark unit joined colleagues from across the London area at a celebration of Britain's maritime history at the House of Lords.

LC Callum Malone and AC Ben Wood attended the Maritime Foundation event, which included a series of presentations on the importance of the Royal Navy's role in national defence, and a presentation on the history of the 16th Century Armada Tapestries, destroyed in the Great Fire of 1834 but now recreated in oil on canvas – the modern copies were also on display.



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## Award for unit's 'role model' PO

A MEMBER of Southwark unit has been publicly honoured with the Diana Award, a unique lifetime honour presented to young people for their compassion and outstanding selfless contribution to their communities.

These exceptional young people are positive role models for a generation by challenging negative stereotypes of young people.

Award holders automatically become members of the Diana Alumni programme, enabling them to continue their hard work and provide them with the skills to develop to their full potential.

PO George Whitfield has been chosen for the award because of his commitment and work with Southwark Sea Cadets, London Nautical School and the London Irish Rifles Association Band.

At the Surrey Square headquarters of TS. Cossack, Lt Cdr (SCC) Allan Phillips RNR said: "We at Southwark Sea Cadets are extremely proud of PO George Whitfield."

"This award will encourage him to continue his voluntary work in the local community, and will hopefully inspire others to get involved."

"George is honoured to receive such a fantastic award."

Maggie Turner, chief executive of the Diana Award, said: "This highly-prestigious award gives young people, of all abilities, circumstances and cultures, recognition at a time when their life choices are still to be made, enabling them to make a real positive difference to their communities."

"As individuals Award holders change lives, but as a group of community entrepreneurs they have the power and ambition to build the cohesive society in which we would all like to live."

For further information on the Diana Award, or to make a nomination, visit [www.diana-award.org.uk](http://www.diana-award.org.uk)

## Book yourself an adventure

BOOK your place now for an amazing offshore opportunity.

The offshore season starts soon, and Sea Cadets has places available on several of its fleet.

Try your hand at sailing a 29-metre square-rigged tall ship or navigating the new power vessel TS Jack Petchey.

There is also the chance to sail a 35ft Tradewind yacht and progress your RYA qualifications.

You can book as an individual or part of a unit team, to find out full details call: 02392 765 512.

See next month's *Navy News* for further details of the offshore programme for this year.

## Community stalwarts

TWO members of the Corps in the Midlands have won community awards at an event hosted and supported by their employers, St Andrew's Healthcare.

Lt (SCC) Marc Pether RMR and Lt (SCC) Sean 'Smudge' Smith RMR were awarded a Community Stars Award for their work with cadets.

Marc being the CO at **Kettering unit** and Sean is detachment commander at **Northampton**.

They each received £100 for their units, and Marc won the overall award, receiving another £250 for the unit and £250 in prize vouchers for himself.

Marc is the Operational Lead for hospital security at Northampton and Sean has organisational responsibility for management and leadership development.

They were chosen by a panel of employees from a number of nominations put forward, so they were delighted to both be recognised for the voluntary work they do.



● North West Area cadets at the wide open sands of Ainsdale Beach for their orienteering exercise

Pictures: Nigel Huxtable

# CCF thrive down on the range

FOLLOWING on from the success of the first regional leadership weekend at RAF Wittering last spring, Combined Cadet Force members from the North-West of England got the chance to sample the delights of leadership training at an Army facility.

The Altcar range, near Formby on Merseyside, can accommodate hundreds of soldiers or cadets, but with the training being held over Remembrance weekend the camp and training area was practically deserted.

Apart from the 16 CCF cadets, of course – and the solitude added a special poignancy for those taking their drill assessment during the two minutes silence.

CPO Taff Urie and WO Andy Brownrigg, along with CCF officers from local schools, managed to include a seven-minute lesson into the weekend's

activities.

Those activities ranged from completing the local obstacle course to Command tasks in the Army gymnasium adjacent to the ranges.

Orienteering was carried out on the undulating dunes and wide-open sands of Ainsdale Beach, just down the coast from the Royal Birkdale golf course.

The cadets also had the opportunity to meet two Royal Marines from the RM Visibility Team.

Having completed the weekend successfully the cadets are all now ready to undertake the week-long leadership course at HMS Raleigh, at Torpoint in Cornwall.

They can take an alternative path by attempting a BTEC cadet qualification through their own schools.

● A North West area CCF cadet attempts the assault course at Altcar range training camp



## Norfolk Broads flotilla



● Cadets from three units – Gosforth (nearest camera), Caterham and Chester le Street – with their vessels on the Norfolk Broads

members of the public and fellow boaties as the cadets wore uniform with white caps for the week.

POC Jacob Cole, of Dauntless, said: "We were given a round of applause as we left Oulton Broad by the people on the shore –

this made all the cadets feel very happy and proud."

CPO Healy and his opposite number from Caterham, S/Lt (SCC) Aaron Clarke, have already finalised plans for the next trip and the deposits are flooding in.

## NW Area celebrates award scheme success

CADETS and volunteers celebrated their Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) Award achievements at the inaugural presentation evening for the North West Area, held at Naval Regional HQ Merseyside.

More than 40 awards – gold, silver and bronze – were handed out, as well as certificates marking their years of service to the awards scheme, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2006.

Of particular note was a certificate for 44 years of service, presented to Lt (SCC) John Hithersay of Bolton unit.

John reckons he has helped more than 200 cadets attain a DoE award over more than four decades.

After being presented with his own award, the officer said: "I was very honoured to receive my certificate – it was unexpected and I am very proud."

Guests at the ceremony were



● Lt Col John Davies RM presents the Stephenson Trophy to Barrow CO Lt (SCC) Ted Creighton RNR

## First-time win for Barrow

BARROW cadets hosted a visit by the Captain of Sea Cadets and the North West Area Officer, who had a very special duty to perform.

Capt Mark Windsor and Lt Col John Davies RM called in at the Barrow-in-Furness unit for an informal visit while cadets were undertaking their normal training.

At the end of the evening the unit Commanding Officer, Lt Ted Creighton, received the Stephenson Trophy for the best unit in the North West Area, watched by all the cadets and staff – the first time the unit has won it in the 54 years the trophy has been presented.

This came as a great shock and unsurprisingly had completely stunned the unit staff – and made everyone feel proud of TS Sovereign's achievement.

The North West Area covers 58 units from Carlisle in the north to Stafford in the south, Buxton in the east to Holyhead in the west.

Winning this award is a culmination of a great deal of effort from all who are currently associated with the Barrow unit and many who have helped put the unit on such a good footing over the past 20 years with the development of key facilities and equipment.

This includes committee members, the Parents and Supporters Association, the uniformed and civilian staff and, crucially, the cadets who have applied themselves professionally and with such passion.

The assessment process is conducted throughout the year and covers all aspects of the unit, including performance of the committee, effectiveness of the parents association, the building fabric and training equipment, the training planning as well as achievements in cadet advancements, specialisations achievements and proficiencies, uniform dress and bearing and involvement in the community.

The visitors also viewed the unit's impressive facilities and sailing centre.

also treated to performances by the Corps of Drums from Ellesmere Port and a hornpipe demonstration by the cadets of Kendal unit.

Senior Staff Officer for the North West, Cdr (SCC) Janet Evans RNR, who handed out silver awards to 12 cadets, said of their achievements: "It is great to see youngsters having their individual achievements recognised in this way as it is truly youth at its best, achieving DoE awards for their efforts in community, service, skills and expedition elements."

"I sincerely hope this type of evening will be an annual event."

Some 275,000 young people are on the scheme at any time in the UK, with more than 4.5 million participating since 1956.

The volunteering part of the programme is estimated to be worth more than £19 million to society each year.





## Trekkers of the last Ark

NAVY News readers in the West Country will probably know the name Mike Critchley – he regularly appears on the telly and in local newspapers commenting on current Naval affairs.

But long before he was a commentator (he's been in the dark world of journalism for nearly 40 years now), he was a junior officer.

Critchley served in what with hindsight were halcyon days of the RN in the post-WW2 world: the mid-1960s.

This was an era when a career was much more varied than today, thanks to the myriad of overseas postings and global commitments – Far East, Mediterranean, Cod Wars, the withdrawal from Empire.

The first five years of the author's service are covered in the breezy *Britannia to Beira and Beyond* (Maritime Books, £6.99 ISBN 978-1-904459-422), with the emphasis not on 'tedious' things like operations and deployments, but observations and the quirkier side of naval life.

Hence with Beira patrol on HMS Ark Royal IV coming to an end, the great carrier knuckled down to more important matters: a camel trek.

For weeks the anticipation was built up via Ark's onboard TV show *PanArkorama* – an even more labourous pun than you'll find in these pages... A lottery was held to pick the 20 lucky trekkers, the sickbay offered advice on fending off tropical diseases, and the navigator explained how to guide the 'ships of the desert' and offered, should any of the riders become lost, to belch black smoke high above the horizon like some guiding star.

Having been whipped up into a frenzy, the lucky trekkers arrived with their ship at the entrance to Suez, versed in local customs and sayings, vaccines topped up... and not a camel in sight. It had all been an elaborate hoax.

Such fun is part and parcel of RN life, but what about honeymoon cruises?

The midshipman was dispatched to Greek minesweeper Salamina as an interpreter on NATO exercises (the failure to speak any Greek evidently not a hindrance to this liaison job...).

The Salamina was WW2 vintage. 'Old tub' would have been a kind description, hygiene was non-existent, stew comprised 'icebergs of fat' floating around and security was non-existent.

RN vessels guarded top secret NATO material fervently in a ship's comms centre. The Greeks strapped a garden shed on deck and allowed anyone to wander in as they pleased. Not a few top secret NATO key cards were sucked out of the structure in bad weather and drifted on the surface of the Med.

Discipline raised a few eyebrows too (the steward's uniform was covered with more than two dozen patches...). Still at least the captain could be expected to set an example. A bad one.

In the middle of a NATO Medsweepex, he embarked his new wife... and took her on honeymoon to Corfu in the warship.

For several days Allied forces scoured the Adriatic and Ionian seas. A flying boat finally located the missing Salamina, the captain was arrested, court martialled, jailed, then released a few days later because the ship was needed on the exercise and no-one else could take charge.

You couldn't make it up...

LIEUTENANT Commander Roy Baker-Falkner was a major figure in the Fleet Air Arm over which the Royal Navy took sole control in May 1939.

A brilliant pilot and a capable leader, his career culminated in leading the Operation Tungsten strike against the German battleship Tirpitz, writes Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford.

Baker-Falkner played a key role in ironing out sufficient of the problems with the troubled Barracuda aircraft for it to be the effective dive bomber that inflicted serious damage on the enemy capital ship on April 3 1944.

After Tungsten his luck began to run out. Follow-up attacks on Tirpitz miscarried and just after one of these, Operation Mascot, Baker-Falkner was lost on an emergency anti-submarine patrol; he was about to be posted back to test flying.

Graham Drucker is Baker-Falkner's nephew. He has clearly developed a great interest in both his distinguished uncle and the FAA in general, having become Director of the Fleet Air Arm Archive 1939-1945 website. He has certainly built up a remarkable wealth of material that he has used to compile this considerable biography, *Wings Over The Waves* (Pen and Sword, £25 ISBN 978-1-84884-305-9).

It runs to almost 400 pages and is a comprehensive personal account based on extensive contacts with its subject's family; numerous friends and colleagues. The list of those who have assisted with the author's research runs to almost five pages!

The book is clearly more a work of family piety than a critical historical account, but it is no mere hagiography.

Indeed it contains a wealth of material that is of considerable interest to students of the history of British Naval aviation.

The example of how a

## The Grove Review

Canadian Dominion Dartmouth cadet decided to join the 'Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Air Force' is an interesting case study of contemporary Naval training and FAA entry in the period of dual control.

It is also interesting to see the effects of the change to full Royal Navy control, eg giving observers command of squadrons.

Baker-Falkner served in the carrier Glorious in the Mediterranean and the book makes some interesting contributions to the controversy about the character and abilities of Captain D'Oyly-Hughes.

Happily Baker-Falkner had left the ship by the time she was sunk and he spent most of 1940 operating Swordfish from land bases, first in support of the Dunkirk evacuation and then against the invasion threat with many minelaying and bombing sorties.

This often-ignored and gruelling dimension of the Battle of Britain is frequently forgotten, as are the offensive operations later carried out by the Swordfish against German naval bases on the coast of France.

Baker-Falkner did not serve again at sea until April 1941 when he was part of an anti-submarine warfare flight in the old carrier Argus, transporting Hurricanes to Gibraltar for onward passage to Malta.

He rejoined 812 Squadron which had just been redeployed to the Orkneys. The author raises the interesting possibility of what might have been achieved, if

these experienced aircrew had been transferred to Victorious for the Bismarck chase, as requested by the squadron commanding officer.

812 finally got a carrier in July 1941, the old hard-worked pioneer, HMS Furious, which together with HMS Victorious, struck at Petsamo and Kirkenes in the far north – a raid expensive in casualties and more useful in terms of Anglo-Soviet relations than operational results.

Baker-Falkner was transferred to Victorious to replace her depleted air group as Furious was short of fuel, a problem with the converted old

'large light cruisers' that had had its impact on the earlier HMS Glorious debacle.

Baker-Falkner was now posted to HMS Condor at Arbroath, then the deck landing training school where he would be an instructor with 767 Squadron, during which period he starred in an Ealing Studios RN information film *Find, Fix and Strike*.

He then moved to Boscombe Down as a test pilot, where, among other aircraft, he helped solve many of the problems of the none-too-satisfactory Barracuda.

This led to command of a Barracuda squadron, 827, which had just suffered a number of fatal accidents with the tricky aircraft. While building the efficiency of this unit he was also chosen to re-write Fleet Air Arm doctrine – the Naval Air Fighting Instructions – an influential and key duty which demonstrated the value placed on him by his superiors.

He was a natural choice to lead one of the new Torpedo Bomber Reconnaissance Wings, the Eighth, which grouped 827 with 830.

This led to the attacks on Tirpitz and other operations against Norway to keep the Germans

guessing as to where the Allied blow against western Europe might fall in 1944. The book clearly demonstrates the enormous strain under which Baker-Falkner and the other aircrew were working.

This is a major strength of the book. The constant loss of colleagues and friends to accident as much as, if not more than, to enemy action, was an unfortunate and all-too-common feature of Fleet Air Arm life, one which it is all too easy to overlook. It is significant to see in the excellent illustrations how Baker-Falkner, still in his twenties, visibly aged at this time.

The circumstances of his tragic and needless death are considered without coming to a fixed conclusion.

Some say the Commanding Officer of HMS Formidable, Captain Ruck-Keene, demanded that special patrols be flown against a reported U-Boat trap. Other trustworthy first-hand sources assert that it was Baker-Falkner who insisted he flew.

Perhaps he thought that if patrols had to go up at all, he should fly one of them. There had been celebrations in the mess after the day's operations seemed to be over and 'B-F' thought the senior officers were in the least bad condition to fly. Sadly an aircraft with defective equipment was chosen and the stage was set for disaster.

The book holds one's attention. No reader will put it down without feeling they have truly experienced the dynamics of life in the Fleet Air Arm during the war and the strains it put on both the personnel and their families.

Unfortunately, there are rather too many surprising and unfortunate mistakes and gaps in historical context. These do not, however, seriously detract from an interesting, absorbing and worthwhile book, which gives Baker-Falkner the retrospective recognition he clearly deserves.



## The art of war(ships)

BY FAR the most visually-impressive volume to arrive at *Navy News* Towers this month is *Ship* (Conway, £30 ISBN 978-1844-860760), a skip through seven millennia of nautical history – as represented in paintings, posters and photographs.

The bulk of the vessels depicted in the book, edited by the ever-reliable and astute Prof Andrew Lambert, hail from the last 250 or so years.

The result is a *smörgåsbord* of maritime history: ships famous and not so, warships and merchantmen, well-known images (the sinking of the Prince of Wales, Invincible wrecked at Jutland, Vanguard aground in Portsmouth Harbour, HMS Hood at Scapa Flow – as seen from HMS Rodney) and uncommon ones (HMS Ocean arriving at the breakers, the wacky circular Russian gunboat Novgorod... which spun out of control when its guns fired).

It's the visual representation of ships which really catch the eye, however, from the striking art deco poster for the Hamburg-America Line (as seen on the book's cover) and a rather loose interpretation of the first aircraft landing on a carrier (drawn in true *Boy's Own*-fashion), to the present-day work of the great Geoff Hunt, Britain's leading marine artist, such as HMS Dragon being built in Portsmouth and International Fleet Review at anchor in the Solent in 2005.

And then there's 'an accurate representation' of a French invasion barge from 1805, powered by wind and water mills, featuring a castle (with keep) midship, and able to carry 60,000 men and 600 cannon.

# When admirals thought gym'll fix it

RIGHT about now several hundred sailors and Royal Marines should be hitting the slopes of the Alps at the annual winter sports gathering.

Sport – and adventurous training – is one of the big selling points of a career in the 21st Century Senior Service, the 'life without limits' that the recruiters sell.

And it's not a new fad, as Tony Mason and Eliza Riedi show in their intriguing history *Sport and the Military: The British Armed Forces 1880-1960* (Cambridge University Press, £18.99 ISBN 978-0-521-70074-0).

Ninety years ago, with the guns of the Western Front barely silent, the recruiting posters were trying to entice men to join the Forces, proclaiming that life in uniform "isn't all work".

Sport came to the military in earnest – as it did in Victorian society as a whole – in the last couple of decades of the 19th Century as a wave of social reforms swept through the Army and Navy: less brutal punishments, better living conditions, better pay.

And as in the rest of British society, sport was a divisive affair: ratings played football, officers cricket, engineer officers rugby union.

A century on, those class and rank barriers are long gone, but in many respects little has changed when it comes to RN sport. Wherever a ship went in the world at the turn of the 20th Century, its sporting teams were quickly in action against local opposition.

And at home the Navy often struggled to field sides because of "exigences of service" (operational commitments in modern parlance); as a result the Army was the

dominant force in Services sport in the pre-1914 era.

But given time to prepare a squad, however, the odds were rather more even. The RN football team was given ten days to practise ahead of the annual Army-Navy fixture in 1908. They achieved the first Senior Service victory in the competition's history.

The RN is often credited with introducing sport (football especially) to far-flung corners of the world such as Brazil and Korea.

But it also took on board new sports from distant lands; martial arts is not a post-Bruce Lee phenomenon – ju-jitsu was introduced in the Navy in 1906.

Although Mason and Riedi's work will be classed as 'academic' (they are professor and lecturer respectively and the publisher is a university press), this is not a hard read – thanks not least to the use of many contemporary newspaper accounts.

The writers show that sport has played a key moral role in Service life, especially during wartime. Admiral Jellicoe, wary of the dreariness of long stints at Scapa Flow waiting for the Germans to 'come out', ordered comprehensive sports facilities provided for the men of the Grand Fleet.

A golf course was built (for officers), a football pitch laid (although sailors complained it was too boggy) and a boxing ring was even installed on a canteen ship; title bouts were watched by hundreds of sailors who lined the sides of the ship.

No prize was more cherished than the Silver Cockerel, the

Fleet rowing trophy, contested particularly furiously between the wars by capital ships.

"There is nothing in the world to surpass the heartfelt satisfaction and delight when the Cock comes on board – it is a moment worth living and working for," enthused HMS Hood's XO Cdr Rory O'Connor, who wrote the inter-war bible on the art of running a ship.

But the authors also show that there was more to sport in the Navy than encouraging fitness or offering that 'life without limits'.

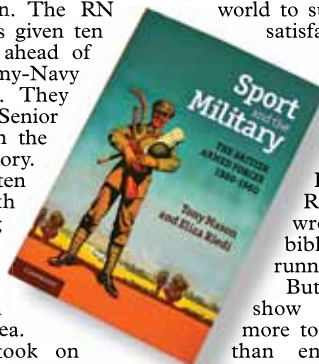
Up to the 1930s, sport was viewed by the upper echelons of the RN especially as something vital to morale and, above all, discipline, Mason and Riedi argue, to the detriment of other welfare, social and economic issues.

However much sailors enjoyed sport, however much it drilled fitness and discipline into them, it couldn't stop mutiny at Invergordon.

That aside, for the most part sport has been as much a part of Naval life as in civilian society. As early as 1922, the Reuters agency wired the results of football matches in Britain to the Mediterranean Fleet – a service maintained to this day (although e-mail and internet have replaced the news wire).

Back then, of course, football was played by ordinary folk, not today's pampered, overpaid 'heroes'.

The Rooneys and Tevezes of this world might wish to take note of guidelines provided for participants at the 1919 'Inter-



Theatre-of-War' championships when sportsmen from the Army, Navy and newly-formed RAF met.

The ruling sporting bodies compiled 'eight commandments' which they expected their athletes to follow. A good sportsman was, they declared, someone who

- plays the game for the game's sake;
- plays for his side and not for himself;
- is a good winner and a good loser, ie is modest in victory and generous in defeat
- accepts all decisions in a proper spirit
- is chivalrous towards a defeated opponent
- is unselfish
- as a spectator, applauds good play on both sides
- never interferes with referees or judges, no matter what the decision.

Ninety years later, Servicemen and women still abide by these guidelines by and large. Whither the rest of the sporting world?



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● Mne Adrian Thorn makes the most of the surf on his waveski

Picture: SAC David Johnson

## Kayakers edged out

SUNNY skies greeted the RN Kayak Association when it arrived at Saunton Sands to face the Army and RAF for the Inter-Services competition.

The surf was small but adequate for the competition making it quite difficult to get a good long run to impress the judges – picking the right wave was of utmost importance.

For the first time in several years (and assisted by one particularly long journey by several methods of transport from somewhere in Northern Scotland) the RN/RM were able to field a full team.

There were several notable individual performances.

POET(ME) 'JC' Cowell was fourth in the high performance class, Mne Adrian Thorn was placed second and CPO Andy Vine fourth in the waveski class.

The ladies team had a fantastic competition with Lt Helen Coxon placed first followed by Lt Cdr Charlie Atkinson in third and Lt Hazel Pyke fourth.

However, the final results are only half of the story and some sterling performances by the rest of the team (some in their first Inter-Services competition), racked up points for the Navy.

The overall result was very close: the RAF won with 109 points, three points ahead of the RN.

Nor is this the end of the success story for the championships.

Thanks to the coaching organised by the surf secretary, WO2 'Batch' Batchelor RM, and provided by Andy McCulloch (English Surf Kayak Team) nine competitors gained their BCU 3\* Surf Kayak Award.

Thoughts have already turned to this year and improving on the 2010 result.

The RN/RM Surf Kayak and Waveski team are on the look-out for new members. Contact [surf@rnka.co.uk](mailto:surf@rnka.co.uk) or visit [www.rnka.co.uk](http://www.rnka.co.uk).



## Clyde's hard (g)raft

HERE'S a rare sight.

Yes, that's right, blue sky in the Falklands.

Taking advantage of reasonable Falklands weather, sailors from HMS Clyde entered the New Year's Day raft race in Stanley.

It's the fourth year running a team from the islands' permanent patrol ship has thrust its oars into the natural harbour – and Clyde hasn't exactly covered herself in glory so far: one last place, two 'did not finish'.

So for the 2011 contest, the ship determined it was time to reverse this trend.

A dedicated team from the marine engineering department, led by WO Mike French, set about designing a race-winning raft.

Construction progressed apace, with raft-building squeezed in around the ship's busy maintenance program.

A comprehensive testing regime ensured the validity of the design (it was heaved over the side in Mare Harbour and six sailors clambered aboard to establish if it was going to float!). After final

modifications it was ready for the big day.

Stanley was treated to near-perfect conditions for the race – bright sunshine and a stiff breeze blowing down the length of the course.

With around one dozen rafts entering the competition, Clyde's team took to the water.

After a gruelling race over nearly a mile of the harbour the valiant efforts of the raft's crew saw Clyde finishing in a respectable third place.

The rafters emerged from the water having learned a good few lessons (not least that a sail would have been a valuable addition to the design).

The race isn't the only sport the patrol ship's crew enjoyed over the festive period.

Boxing Day races are a traditional fixture in Stanley and a sizeable number of locals and personnel from the Mount Pleasant military complex/Mare Harbour (Clyde's home when she's not prowling around the archipelago) attended the 2010 meet.

# Peelers skinned Satans smitten

THE RN Ice Hockey Association started 2011 with a journey to Slough to face the Metropolitan Police at the now-traditional late-night time slot.

When we arrived, there were some slight concerns that the police were practising their pursuit driving skills as we were met with the sight of four go-karts tearing around on the ice, writes Lt Adam Lappin.

It turned out to be an endurance race and delayed the face-off time until midnight (!).

When the team finally stepped on to the ice it was time to renew 'friendly' rivalry between the Senior Service and the Met Police Peelers (in the previous meeting more than a year ago the coppers lost three players to injury for a few weeks).

The game started well as the Navy had a reasonably full bench for an away game: 13 players and two goalkeepers.

An incisive breakaway from Mne B Hubbs (40 Cdo) led to the opening goal. Before ten minutes were up the RN had a 4-0 lead courtesy of manager Kev Cave, Lt Cdr Al Bernard (UKHO) and another strike from Hubbs.

The police were a little slow to respond to this assault on their goalkeeper and this allowed LS D Smalley (MCM2) to skate through the constables' line and fire the Navy's fifth goal of the period in to the net.

The second period opened with the police seemingly still on a coffee break as Kev Cave scored his second early on, finishing off a fine move practised many times in training sessions.

Mne Hubbs latched on to a lazy clearance by the opposition goalie to squeeze the puck between the post and the keeper's shoulder from the narrowest of angles for his hat trick.

PO Tugg Wilson (Chatham) added his first of the night and the eighth for the RN before the police eventually scored their first goal of the game.

Kev Cave continued his run of memorable howlers after receiving a long pass up the ice for a breakaway on the police goal.

He managed to successfully 'deke' the goalie to send him the wrong way and only had fresh air to beat...



● A slap shot from the Navy's S Baker during the drubbing of the Met Police Peelers

Picture: Chris Dickens, [mjdphoto.biz](http://mjdphoto.biz)

...and managed to finish what was a good move by hitting the post from one yard out, before allowing the defence to get back to help their goalkeeper.

Kev did, however, redeem himself not two minutes later when he scored his hat trick goal to round off yet another well-worked team play to move the puck around the police zone using all five Navy players on the ice before putting the puck into the police net.

The period finished with the RN leading 10-1 as the ice was resurfaced for the third and last session.

The Peelers came out fighting in the final period and scored two quick-fire goals to make it 10-3 but in what had become a personal battle, Cave and Hubbs each added another goal to their tallies to give them four apiece.

Making a rare start as a forward – he played the previous three games in goal – AET D Jones (702 NAS) showed a good turn of pace and some quick hands to finish a good solo effort to put the puck past the now-subdued Peelers' goalkeeper.

goalkeeper.

The Navy slapped the cuffs on the Peelers towards the end of the game to add two more goals to the scoresheet, but not before a few lapses in concentration from the RN defensive players.

The first was a clearance from behind the RN goal. Under no pressure it went straight to a Met Police forward to score and the second was a moment of madness from the RN goalie, who decided to make snow angels just as the police forward came towards him...

Needless to say that the forward skated around the floundering keeper to put the puck in the net to make the final score 15-5 to the RN.

The RNHIA left the scene of the crime rather sharpish (at 3am!!) to avoid any retribution in the form of parking tickets and 'on the spot fines' and left the game referee to call CSI Slough to help the Met Police Peelers analyse what had just happened.

The second clash of the month was another away game at Slough

Ice Arena, this time against the local side, the Satans.

This resulted in a not-so-close game, probably due to a lack of available players on the part of the Satans, ending 22-5 in the Navy's favour.

For the record, the RN scorers included: Mne Hubbs (two goals, two assists); AET Jones (four and three); Sgt J Throop (RMR) (two and three); Kev Cave (four and four); Lt Cdr Bernard (one and three).

There's a return fixture with Satans in Gosport on February 5 which should prove to be a more even contest with a better flow to the game.

The team are always on the look-out for new players and will be holding a grass roots event in 2011 with MWS Collingwood at Planet Ice in Gosport on March 15.

More details from [manager@miha.org.uk](http://manager@miha.org.uk), [m-admin@miha.org.uk](mailto:m-admin@miha.org.uk) and [treasurer@miha.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@miha.org.uk) or pop along to a training session in Gosport every Tuesday evening at 10.30pm.

# Sun and snow for squash players

The RN squash season opened with a training camp in Gibraltar, which proved to be extremely successful.

Eleven players made the trip, were accommodated in Service accommodation and given full use of the facilities at the Gibraltar Squash Club for training and routines every day, writes Lt Cdr David Cooke.

The club also provided opposition for two evening matches and a third evening match was arranged against a Gibraltar Combined Services team.

Events at home started with a match against a touring Australian Defence Force side which proved to be too strong for the RN, but who had a very close match against a CS team at Temeraire.

The fixture was part of an annual quadrangular competition and although the Australians won overall, the Royal Navy came a creditable second against opposition from the Jesters and Escorts squash clubs.

Lt Matt Ellicott (HMS Liverpool) led a team to the Channel Islands to take part in the Jersey festival, a highly-competitive event which attracts sides from all over Great Britain.

The Navy were placed in League One and found the opposition very strong; although they gave a good account of themselves, they did not feature in the presentation ceremonies at the end.

The 2010 Combined Services individual championships were held at Temeraire,

attracting the top players from all three Forces.

In the seniors' competition Ellicott won his way through to the semi finals only to come up against his old adversary Damien May, who until March 2010 was an RM Captain but is now an RAF Flt Lt.

May was too sharp for Ellicott on the day and the RN man had to resort to a third/fourth-place play-off, while May received a sound beating by the Army number one (27-1) in the final.

In the U25 competition, last year's champion, Mne Nick Jezeph (RM Poole), breezed his way to the final without breaking into a sweat.

Against a very polished Army player, he sustained an injury in the second game, played on for a short time, aggravated the injury but finally, against his wishes, conceded at the beginning of the fourth game.

AET Stephen Wallace (Culdrose) reached the semi-final, but after taking the first game against the eventual champion, lost the next three – a creditable performance nevertheless.

A low-key Inter-Command tournament was held in November, with Scotland withdrawing beforehand and poor turn-outs from Naval Air and Portsmouth.

The Royal Marines, as usual, came in strength and convincingly won the competition with Plymouth Command runners-up.

The RN Championships scheduled for December had to be postponed because of inclement weather conditions (snow).

They were due to take place as *Navy News*

went to press, ahead of the Inter-Service contest at Temeraire from February 8-10.

Meanwhile the RN knockout cup had been running since September and the semi-finals and finals were held at Temeraire just before Christmas.

Teams from BRNC, Sultan, Heron and Drake had won their way through, all of whom produced some exciting and enthusiastic squash. Sultan, with an ex-RN U25 player and a current RN Veteran in their ranks, looked the strongest team on paper and indeed that proved to be the case as they eased their way to take the trophy.

BRNC came a most creditable second with Drake hot on their heels in third place.

England Squash, the governing body of the sport, has now incorporated the sport of racket ball within their auspices and are extremely keen to promote this fastest growing sport in the UK.

The organisation's official website – [www.englishsquashandracketball.com](http://www.englishsquashandracketball.com) – provides a lot of information on rules, news, clubs, coaching and much more and should be visited.

It's proving to be a very popular game and the RNSRA are equally interested in getting as many sailors as possible playing this racket sport.

Ships, establishments and units should contact the RN/RM Sports Lottery Manager, Lt Cdr Robin Young, on 02392 723806 or [lotman@fleetfost.mod.uk](mailto:lotman@fleetfost.mod.uk) for further information.





## Money for old rope climbing

ROYAL, climb that 30ft rope.

Roger.

And again.

Roger.

Ok, another 98 times now.

Er, roger.

PTI Sgt Sam Sheriff (pictured here by LA(Phot) Andy Laidlaw) did just that, scaling 3,000ft in 100 stages using a 30ft-rope in the gym of 45 Cdo in Arbroath.

It took the NCO three minutes shy of 11 hours to complete the challenge – and enter the record books.

One week before the 30-year-old from Bridlington completed his marathon climb he could be found in the chimpanzee enclosure of Edinburgh Zoo (yes, really...) where he received one or two theory lessons from some undisputed masters of rope climbing.

He may also have picked up some dietary tips during this visit because when climbing, Sam maintained his energy levels by eating large quantities of bananas and sweet potatoes.

As well as staking his place in the record books, the key aim of Sam's climb was to honour his fellow Royals.

The event was the latest staged by the men of 45 to raise money for the Woodlands Garden Project, converting part of the RM Condor site into a focal point for remembrance and reflection in the Commando.

The intention is to strike the right balance between commemoration and celebration and it has an area that is suitable for young children, some of whom have lost their fathers.

It will also provide an invaluable tranquil location for those carrying unseen mental scars to reflect and adjust to life back home after operational tours.

The downside is that the Arbroath commandos require around £175,000 to complete the garden; Sam's exertions have managed to shave nearly £3k off that total.

"This was a tremendous feat of endurance and a truly remarkable achievement," enthused 45's Commanding Officer Lt Col Oliver Lee.

"Work has now started on the Woodlands Garden and this fundraising activity, and many like it, continue to make a significant contribution to this project."

If you'd like to support the project, visit [www.bmycharity/100ropes](http://www.bmycharity/100ropes).



## Setting new benchmarks

BRITAIN'S former strongest man Neil Elliott demonstrates the push element of a record-breaking 'push-pull' weightlifting event at Faslane.

The base's Sportsdrome was the setting for the RN's first 'push-pull' competition north of the border, with Mr Elliott – also 14-time Scottish shot put and discus champion – guest of honour, kicking (or rather lifting) off proceedings.

Ten competitors lined up for two events – the bench press and the dead lift, each contest split into weight and gender categories.

It was the ladies who began the bench press with LPT Reggie Cawley setting an RN record in the 63kg class after she managed to lift 50kg.

LWtr Eloise Smith in the 80kg class soon followed Reggie's example and set a record for her weight and junior age group by lifting 30kg. Meanwhile AB Michelle Brennan made it a hat-trick for the ladies with a 40kg lift.

The women's achievement was made all the more impressive by the fact that none of them had much previous lifting experience.

Next it was the men's turn in the bench press and AB Andy Burn kept the momentum going with a 100kg lift in the 67.5kg category – another RN record for a junior lifter.

Although the sailor's achievements were impressive, it was left to strongman Neil to demonstrate how a professional does it. Giving an exhibition lift, he pressed an enormous 210kg in the 125kg class, leaving the spectators agog.

Even though the dead-lift event was new to many of the athletes taking part, all of them put in a sterling effort. Both LWtr Smith and AB Brennan stepped up to the mark and set RN records.

The competition was rounded-off by another exhibition from Mr Elliott who pulled an amazing 280kg in the dead-lift.

Picture: LA(Phot) Stu Hill, FRPU North

# Cumberland's magnificent 7s

WHILE Britain froze HMS Cumberland's rugby side headed to the greenest part of the UAE to take part in the Al Ain 7s Classic Competition.

Under coach CPO Dave Sibson, the frigate's team, the Fighting Sausages were drawn in a group with Dubai Harlequins and Dubai Wasps, beginning the tournament against the former.

The game started at a frantic pace with Cumberland settling in early to the quicker paced game and scored no fewer than three tries in quick succession.

The second half began with Harlequins scoring first with a good breakaway try, however this was answered with a further two tries from Cumberland to make the final score 31-7.

Next up the Wasps, whose team included former Samoa and London Wasps prop Trevor Leota; heavier than he was at his prime the ex-international bounced off a few tackles and showed deft skills however the youth and power of the now-gelling Cumberland squad produced a good all round performance with the game ending 57-0.

This meant a top-place finish in the group, lining up a semi-final against Dubai Exiles as the contest moved into the knockout phase. After a nervous start, Cumberland were 5-0 up at the break. Good pressure ended with a score for AB(CIS) Taff Hughes.

Nerves now settled, the second half saw the experience of Cumberland's Navy Squad members ET(ME) Sleeman and LS Nial Copeland come to the fore as the scores came thick and fast, zeroing the Exiles whilst amassing 24 points.

To the main pitch and the Classic Cup Final against the Dubai Hurricanes, a very well drilled and young side used to the weather and conditions.

A ten-minute first half brought a brace for Cumberland one each



● S/Lt Josh Gorst breaks away from the Dubai Harlequins in the opening round of the Al Ain 7s

Picture: LA(Phot) Jay Allen, FRPU East

for Copeland and ET(ME) Ryan Lovett without reply from the Hurricanes, but they were far from done.

Two unanswered tries in the second period levelled the game at 14-14 and the tension rose.

Great work and inter-passing between ETME 'Gail' Porter, PO (AWT) 'Taff' Newall, S/Lt Josh Gorst and ET(ME) 'Lily' Allan saw Lovett score the winner in the corner – and hence win the tournament; Lovett was also named player of the tournament award.

This was not the only representation from Cumberland in the contest. Praise is due to the Cumberland Social side which struggled in the early exchanges but persevered to reach the bowl final where Trevor Leota's Dubai Wasps proved too strong.

Back in the UK, 2010 closed with RNRU seniority looking to the Inter-Service championship.

There was an abundance of rugby success that posed selection headaches for the Senior XV coaches to ponder before the first fixture away to Oxford University on February 2.

The successful U23 team completed a hard-fought victory

the Corps' right wing along with the eagerly-anticipated duel between young loosehead Mne Josh Terry propping against Naval Air Command's experienced John Court, who was returning from a lengthy lay-off.

None disappointed and although current Navy loosehead Kyle Mason made an impact when coming off the bench, he knows that the current crop of young props like Terry, Tom Blackburn and Kye Beazley are developing into real contenders for Senior representative honours.

With Navy and Combined Services lock forward Marsh Cormack missing the Command final, U23 captain Mne Dennis Scotthorne took the opportunity to enhance his growing reputation with a very effective partnership with Stu McLaren in the Royal Marines' second row.

Their strong lineout and work in the loose ensured that the Corps spent most of the game on the front foot. This in turn allowed one of Naval Air Command's U23 backs, Aaron Hunt, to demonstrate that his defence has improved and could prove to be the physical presence that the Navy has looked for either in midfield or on the wings.

The marines ran out victors on the night and are the 2010 Inter Command (Inverdale Cup) Champions.

Finally – and coming full circle – RNRU's success was completed in Dubai where England 7s and Navy flanker Greg Barden contributed to England's tournament success.

Not to be outdone on the international front, the Navy women saw 'Charlie' Lewis selected for Scotland against Spain.

With such a number of players obviously in good form it is hoped that 2011 will see RN rugby continue to produce exciting and winning rugby on the field as it seeks to defend the Senior Inter-Service title and look to build on the very promising performance by the women's team.

## Chance to sail in Scotland

THERE'S the chance to sail a yacht around the stunning waters of western Scotland through the spring and summer.

Joint Service Sailing Exercise Scotwest 2011 allows personnel from all three Forces to gain experience, training and qualifications in a Contessa 38 yacht, HMSTC Gawaine.

The yacht's based in Faslane and it is from there that the exercise, run over 13 legs each of a week's duration, begins on May 30 and ends on August 28.

The first and last legs are 'delivery trips'.

In between, Gawaine will spend the bulk of her time between Ardfarn Yacht Centre on Loch Craignish and Kyle of Lochalsh – regarded as one of the finest sailing areas in Europe.

The yacht will be used to provide training to RYA standards from 'competent crew' to 'yachtmaster offshore'.

Scotwest runs every year; in 2010 74 personnel took advantage of Gawaine – 37 gained yachting experience, ten achieved day skipper qualifications and 27 received a 'competent crew' certificate.

There's more info in DIN 2011DIN07-013, or contact PO Stephen Smith, Clyde Sailing Centre Manager, on 93255 3519.

## Beware the deadly shins

THE RN ladies triumphed over Weymouth in their third representative match of the 2010-11 football season.

Despite dominating the game – and playing some first-class footie – the women missed a host of chances... until a fluke four minutes from time sealed a 1-0 win.

Albion's CPO Becky Brown met a cross from PO(PT) Lisa Farthing. The Weymouth keeper flung herself across the goal to stop the ball, but fortunately for Brown, it came off her shin and went unintentionally in the opposite direction and into the goal.

This was by far the ladies' best performance of the season with some great individual performances by a number of players old and new – and just the boost the team needed.



## Next month



**Plain talking – 3 Commando Brigade's final work-out before returning to Helmand**



**Last man in Basra – the only British serviceman in Iraq's second city**



**Second-generation wizardry – inside the Merlin Mk2**

**Plus**

**The long walk – farewell parades for Ark Royal, Chatham and 800 NAS**



## SPORT



● The ever-reliable PO Micky Warriner blocks a strike from the RAF's Rob Machin in the RN's 9-4 drubbing of the airmen as the Senior Service took the indoor title

# Magnificent Micky keeps Army at bay

**THE Navy men lifted the Inter-Services indoor hockey title after two thrilling encounters with the Army and RAF.**

The team took to the 'pitch' against the latter with the airmen already a match down; they lost 2-0 in the opener against the Army, writes *Lt Cdr Alan Walker, RNHA*.

That opener probably took a fair bit out of RAF legs because before the first ten minutes were up, the Navy had put four goals past the RAF keeper for no reply courtesy of a brace from Mark Dixon and a strike apiece from Danny Makaruk and Mark Stanton.

By now the RN were stroking it about full of confidence, wondering if and when the RAF were going to turn up.

With six minutes of the half remaining the RAF came out with all guns blazing. A fierce shot hit the RN post, then another strike produced a great save from Warriner in the Navy goal. The RN coach sensed that the besieged were coming out to fight and called time out.

From the restart, the Senior Service reasserted themselves when superb work by Lee Milton – the RN U23 skipper in another incarnation – won a corner after a splendid tussle with the RAF's no-nonsense Sagrott; it was well saved by the RAF keeper.

The time-out appeared to have nipped the RAF revival in the bud as the clock ticked down the final three minutes but with around 60 seconds left, the Air Force's Ben Lowe pulled one back.

With just 20 seconds on the clock, the airmen had halved the deficit to add an element of respectability to a scoreline which

did not reflect the overwhelming balance of play to the Navy.

*Sailor beware: if they can score two in a minute, they might do it again...*

The second period began as the first ended; an unstoppable shot from the Light Blues and it was 4-3 to the RN.

This was the critical point of the match; if the RAF had equalised they might have dragged their weary legs to score more.

As it was the Navy restored their two goal lead with 16 minutes left. Two minutes later it was 6-3 courtesy of a Makaruk strike from a corner won by Stanton.

The latter sealed his hat-trick with nine minutes left, before two more strikes – Dixon also completing a hat-trick, while Tim Lomas stuffed the ball past the despairing keeper; the RN had an unassailable 9-3 lead.

The Navy clearly thought they had done enough with two minutes left and let the end go a bit.

The ever-dangerous Sagrott had the final, defiant word for the Air Force, slotting past Warriner to close out the game at 9-4 to the Senior Service.

The deciding clash with the Army began quietly enough until, out of the blue, Adam Duke ran through from the back to lift the ball over the keeper to give the Navy a 1-0 lead.

Three minutes later the soldiers were on level terms when the outstanding Shane Vincent put away the Army's first corner.

Two Navy corners in rapid succession brought brilliant saves from Dan Cattermole in the Army goal.

As usual RN skipper Stanton was on fire and won a corner which Makaruk dispatched in the usual style for a 2-1 advantage.

It was soon 3-1 courtesy of a

first goal in RN colours for Richard Jenkin. He trebled his tally before the break in a blistering seven-minute spell which gave the Navy a 5-1 lead over the soldiers at half-time.

The final 20 minutes of the championships began with lots of RN pressure on the Army goal which eventually ended with Jenkin slamming a short corner into the roof for his fourth.

The soldiers struck back through Vincent – 6-2 to the RN; no-one knew it yet but this game was only just getting going.

A short corner certain goal was stopped on the line by Duke. Unfortunately he got a bobble and another short corner, leading to a penalty stroke which Vincent put in the roof again for his hat-trick.

The Army now had their tails up and won three short corners on the trot.

All were saved by the unbelievable Warriner, before a Navy break-out produced a near miss from Jenkin up the other end.

In return, the troops forced another short corner; inevitably the bright young Vincent roofed again – 6-4 to the Navy.

There was still time for Vincent to score his fifth and pull the Army back to within a goal of the sailors.

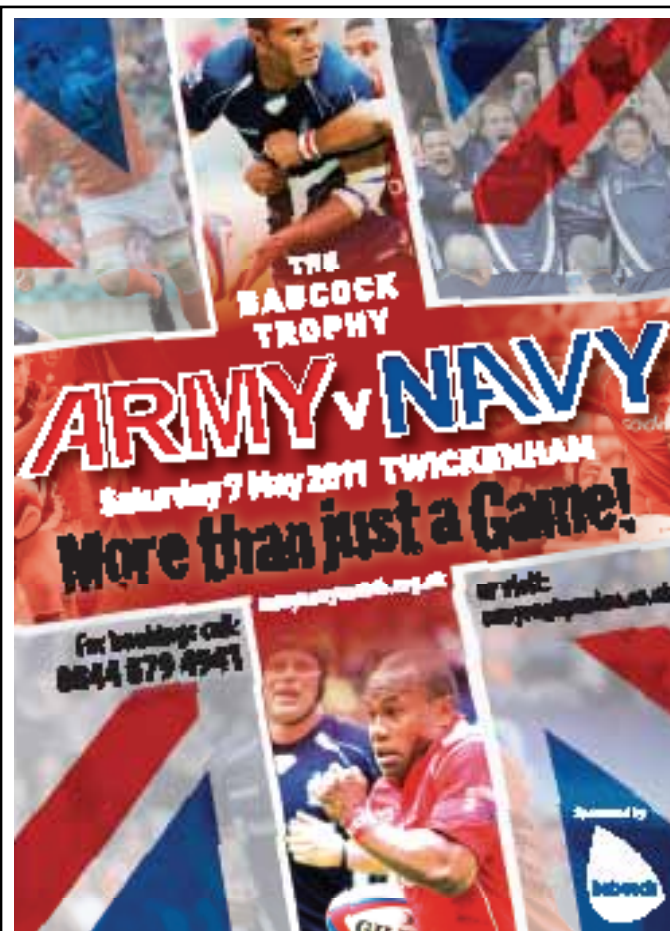
The next goal was going to be crucial: Jenkin knew it more than most as he tried a shot – and missed.

Quick as a flash he regained possession and aided by a great advantage from the umpire made no mistake in putting the ball past Cattermole on the deck in the Army goal for 7-5 to the RN.

With two minutes left, the Navy called a time-out: the need for cool heads was never so important.

Attack became the best form of defence for both teams. Micky Warriner was still keeping the Army out as the final whistle went – and the sailors were crowned Inter-Services indoor champions for 2010.

Sadly the ladies were unable to match the men's achievements; they suffered heavy defeats at the hands of both the RAF (6-2) and Army (5-0). The soldiers lifted the ladies' cup after a tight victory over the Air Force.



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